

COVER STORY

On the cover: Plants in this Birmingham garden, featured in the Healthy Garden Tour next week, come from the garden of Nancy Kader's mother. Photo by Marty Figley.



PHOTOS BY MARTY FIGLEY

Vegetable helping: Nancy Kader's vegetable garden includes marigolds for insect control.

These gardens will be open SATURDAY, JULY 20:

- Tour No. 1, southeastern Oakland County: gardens in Clawson, Pleasant Ridge, Royal Oak, Ferndale and Troy. Buy tickets at the SOCRRA office, 3910 W. Webster (12-1/2 Mile, between Greenfield and Coolidge), Royal Oak; or the Troy Historical Museum, 17 Mile (Wattles), just west of Livernois.
- Tour No. 2, Dearborn and Dearborn Heights. Buy tickets at the Henry Ford Estate at the University of Michigan-Dearborn, off of Evergreen between Michigan Avenue and Ford.
- Tour No. 3, Livonia and Redford. Buy tickets at the Livonia Public Library, Farmington Road at Five Mile.

These gardens will be open SUNDAY, JULY 21:

- Tour No. 4, southeastern Oakland County: gardens in Beverly Hills, Lathrup Village, Birmingham and Southfield. Buy tickets at the SOCRRA office in Royal Oak.
- Tour No. 5, North Rosedale Park/Grandmont/Northwest Detroit. Buy tickets at the North Rosedale Community House, 18445 Scaradale, northwest Detroit (near the Southfield Freeway and Grand River).
- Tour No. 6, downtown: Wyandotte and Southgate. Buy tickets at the Downriver Recycling Center, 15100 Northline Road, Southgate.

GARDENS SHOW HEALTHY ATTITUDE

BY MARTY FIGLEY
SPECIAL WRITER

A Healthy Garden Tour, will take place 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, July 20, and noon to 4 p.m. Sunday, July 21.

Ticket price is \$3 for each tour. Different gardens are open each day, rain or shine. Children under 10 years of age aren't allowed. Tickets and maps are available at time of purchase at designated stations.

Direct questions weekdays to Southeastern Oakland County Resource Recovery Authority in Royal Oak at (810) 288-5150, or the Henry Ford Estate in Dearborn at (313) 593-5590. The tour is co-sponsored by the authority and the Detroit Free Press.

The southeastern Michigan area has been divided into six sections so that many people can visit any or all of the gardens. (See the related schedule.)

All of the gardens on these tours (each tour has six or more gardens) use a minimal amount of chemicals or none at all. The styles are quite diverse so that visitors will be able to get ideas as well as enjoy their beauty. They feature annuals, perennials, herbs, shrubs and/or vegetables.

Working wonders

One Birmingham garden has been in the making for five years from what once had been a very neglected yard and garden. Now it is a charming garden with lots to see and emulate.

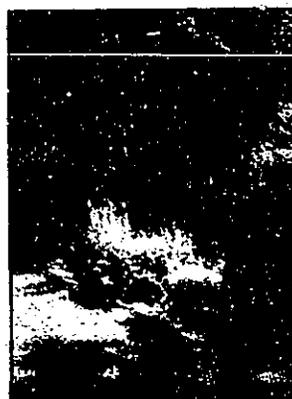
Nancy Kader has done wonders in the five years she has lived in her home. The front was a typical yard with foundation plantings, grass and a walk straight up the center.

Now this area has been fenced in with a 36-inch tall wrought-iron gate. Yellow "Stella de Oro" daylilies march around the outside of the fence and

holly (kept to a perfect height) guards the other side. The rest of the beds are filled with lilies, peonies, hostas, several Rhododendrons "Hong Kong" with creamy/yellow blooms that are "just stunning early in the season," Kader said.

Two trees anchor the corners. A Purple Pendula is "nifty" with purple foliage and smooth bark of the same color and a "Sugartime" crabapple has "interesting looking nubby bark that I love." The fruit hangs on the branches until spring, for which the birds are thankful, and it also adds texture in the middle of winter.

Kader especially enjoys watching the hummingbirds as they visit the two "enormous" trumpet vines on the front of the house. The vines are quite old.



Patio view: The view from the patio is colorful.

In the back

A border garden along the back fence is filled with plants that belonged to Kader's mother. Bright red dianthus, orange poppies, several kinds of lilies (including Oriental), white astilbe, bleeding heart (these last two, she has found, do well in the sun) and white shasta daisies like their new home. String trellises against the wooden fence support beans, limas and cucumbers.

Speaking of vegetables, Kader has reserved a sunny spot for them and it is packed with the likes of kohlrabi, cabbage, two kinds of spinach, three different onions, leeks, beets, garlic, carrots, peppers, tomatoes and lettuce. Marigolds edge the bed for pest control.

Around the edges of the enclosed garden many of the same plants seen in the front garden are growing here, as well as others such as several strategically placed clematis vines. A ligularia with large, heart-shaped leaves adds still more texture and will bloom with tall, bright yellow spike flowers. "Purple Palace" heuchera, roses, tall delphiniums (a white and a deep purple one called "Black Night"), Rudbeckia, Jacob's Ladder, bee balm and petunias as well as other flowers are enticing to birds, bees and butterflies.

Special houses

Six birdhouses are included in the garden as well as a specially built butterfly house. Kader has put twigs inside to lure them and hopes that this year they will make a home there. It did take two or three years for birds to take up residence in the houses, so she is patient.

A small pond centers the back yard and the running water is a delightful sound. Koi and goldfish live year-round as the deepest part is 36 inch-

ea. Plants include ribbon grass, Iris, Taro, papyrus, water forget-me-nots and watercress, which the fish eat.

The far end of the garden contains grapes, raspberries, blueberries, currants and rhubarb among the flowers while two large stone lions sit on pedestals and stand guard.

The raised brick patio rests against the house and is edged with purple lobelia. This ambitious lady designed the brick walk that leads from the porch steps (and up to the patio) with a slope rather than steps. This idea adds a graceful feel to the landscape.

Kader has done most of the work herself and said, "I'll never do brick again."

She composts outdoors and worm composts in the basement using a special container. She uses all her kitchen scraps, keeps the mixture moist and is left with worm castings and water. She drains the water off to provide rich nutrients to the garden. When I asked why, she replied, "It just seems responsible to me." Soaker hoses are kept in every garden year round.

Kader said she spends 20 hours a week in the garden in the spring and it is obvious she opens a lot of time there during the rest of the season. She has planned the garden to have successive bloom all year long. A new metal obelisk stands waiting for a newly planted clematis "six-inch white flowers — a new one" to scramble over it. She has also installed lighting and said, "That's a real joy."