

GARDEN

FROM PAGE C1

condominium gardens.

INVITING

The McCooks have lived on the property since 1979. Over the years the garden theme has changed. The current color theme is blue and white. Blue ceramic spheres dot the landscape.

A first-time visitor to the site is astonished upon going to the back of the house and seeing the garden, which flows 100 yards down to the river. At the top of the hill, behind the house, stands a large maple tree, its graceful trunk resembling a lyre.

"That sets the stage," Jim said.

The McCooks built around the maple, putting in a slate patio. Barbecues and garden parties take place here. Jim McCook and the daughter installed the stone steps edging one side.

When they moved onto the property, the McCooks cleaned out the river and worked the way up to the house, clearing the site to create the garden. Almost every room in the house is oriented toward it, including the family room and screened-in porch the family built.

Even when the colorful blooms are gone, interest abounds: The cast of characters includes hostas in a variety of textures and shades, pachysandra, yellow wild lilies and yews.

At this time a delicate tricolor beech, a cluster of magnificent rhododendrons, and groups of azaleas still contribute various hues to the scene.

The McCooks planted a birch tree on the site; it now towers over part of the area. They transplanted small boxwood trees from the front of the house to the garden; the trees exploded into lush growth.

Along one side, almost entirely out of view, are private niches: a "secret garden,"

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The patio is a good place for barbecues and garden parties.

where the McCooks' grandchildren look for leprechauns on St. Patrick's Day (and find treats), and a "good witches' circle" where the youngsters have peanut butter sandwiches.

Also tucked away is a cottage-like tool shed built by Jim McCook.

A "twig wall" runs along the side, held in place by cedar posts. This was designed by Aida Marie McCook. Instead of carrying trimmed branches all the way up the hill to dispose of them, she arranges them in the wall.

Antique can be found almost everywhere: A "Maiae sail flag" stands in the center of the garden, flapping in the wind; a Frank Lloyd Wright reproduction of one of the *Spirites* statues that were created for the Midway Gardens in Chicago in 1913; metal trees from a window display at the Burberry store at the Somerset Collection; a topiary from English Gardens; and statues of children, turtles and snails are among other accents.

Wildlife on the site includes deer, chipmunks ("by the hundreds," Jim said), blue heron that perch on almost any tree



Trimmed branches form an attractive "twig wall," held in place by cedar posts.

limb, and carp and minnows in the river.

A white goose that found a home on the property will take small, polite bites from bread it is offered; two Canada geese act as escorts. A pair of foxes has been seen in a dance, each standing on two feet and resting its paws on the other's shoulders.

Aida Marie follows a "live and let live" philosophy when it comes to gardening. While she works hard at clearing around the plants, her advice doesn't extend "beyond 'throw milorgonite around' and 'don't fuss.'"

"If it lives, it lives. If it doesn't, something else will come up," she said.

INFORMATION

The Village Garden Tour starts at Beverly Park, where volunteers from the Southeastern Oakland County Resource Recovery Authority (SOCRRA) will staff tables with information on composting and environmentally sound gardening practices.

All proceeds from the tour will go to community projects. Work by the Village

Women's Club of Beverly Hills benefits many different projects, including improvements to Beverly Park, to schools and around the village, and contributions to charities. The club sponsors Beverly Hills' Memorial Day parade and carnival.

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Village Garden Tour

What: A tour featuring six large and small gardens within Beverly Hills, sponsored by the Village Women's Club of Beverly Hills. All proceeds will go to community projects.

When: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday, June 22.

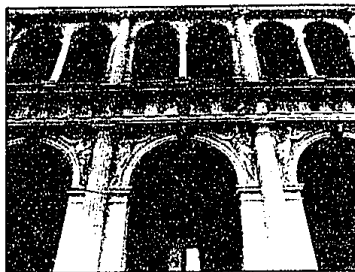
Begin the tour by picking up ticket (or redeeming presale tickets), map and booklet Sunday at Beverly Park. The park is one-half mile west of Southfield Road, between 13 and 14 Mile on Beverly Road.

Volunteers from the Southeastern Oakland County Resource Recovery Authority will staff tables at Beverly Park with information on composting and environmentally sound gardening practices.

Tickets: \$10 presale, \$12 tour day. Presale tickets may be bought at the Beverly Hills Village Offices, 18500 W. 13 Mile (or mail a check, payable to Village Women's Club of Beverly Hills, to 31130 Downing Place, Beverly Hills, MI 48025).

Coupons for a two-for-one burger at Brudy's Pub or a two-for-one dessert at The Beverly Hills Grill are included in the booklet and cost of the ticket.

Information: (248) 258-2766



No problems here in Monte Nagler's picture of the Breakers Mansion in Newport, R.I.

Have you ever shot a roll of film, begun to rewind it into the cassette and then ... you guessed it ... found the film never advanced

through the camera? In fact, there are a number of helpful hints to keep you out of a jam and improve your photographs. Here



Focus on Photography

Monte Nagler

are some:

■ To resolve the film advance problem, simply watch the film rewind lever as you advance the film. If it turns, everything is OK. If not, the film isn't going through the camera. It's that simple.

■ Thoroughly read your camera's owner manual. Carry it in your camera bag for quick reference. It contains valuable information on your camera as well as useful information on photography.

■ Use a skylight or haze filter on all your lenses. They

will not only warm up colors and cut through haze, but they will also protect your valuable lens.

■ To be safe, especially with electronic cameras, change batteries in your camera once a year, even though it still appears to be functioning.

■ Tape the label from your film box on the back of your camera. Some cameras have slots for this purpose as a reminder of what kind of film you are shooting. If you don't take many pictures, it's easy to forget what's in your camera.

■ Don't always use fast films. I recommend using the slowest speed film that conditions and lighting will permit. You'll get finer grain, more vivid colors and save money on film, too.

■ When is it safe to hand hold your camera? Shoot at the shutter speed that comes closest to the focal length of your lens, not slower. For example, with your normal 50-mm lens, shoot at 1/60 second or faster. With a 135-mm lens, use 1/125 or faster. This same rule applies to your zoom lens, too.

Monte Nagler is a fine art photographer based in Farmington Hills. You can leave a message for him at (734) 953-2047.

WHERE CAN I FIND?

Through reader feedback, this interactive column is dedicated to helping readers locate retail merchandise that's difficult to find. If you know where a product is sold or service is available, call (248) 961-2555 and leave a message with your name and phone number. Please be patient about your requests and feedback; we receive an overwhelming number of phone calls. Also, please spell any uncommon items. If you don't see information about your request, we couldn't find it. Requests are published twice.

WHAT WE FOUND

A cordless iron is made by Oreck the manufacturer of

vacuum cleaners. Look in the Yellow Pages for a dealer in your area.

Fluoride for nails is sold at area Rite-Aid and Meijer stores.

China place cards can be purchased at Rynne China Co., 222 W. Eight Mile Road, Hazel Park, (248) 577-0937.

Norma Virgin Lipstick can be purchased at Maynard's in Tushingham, Mich., (616) 559-4422, a division of Beauty for all seasons or on the Internet at www.BFAS.com.

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