

Residents pool resources in yards



GARDEN SPOT
MARTY FIGLEY

When Lydia Wallace and her family moved into their home in Birmingham 13 years ago, they inherited a large pond, approximately 80 by 60 feet.

The bottom and sides are clay, which had absorbed any chemicals put on the lawn and flower beds by previous owners, who had also used many chemicals to maintain the pond.

She didn't want to use chemicals, preferring a natural area to encourage wildlife. Now, two-thirds of the surface of the water is covered with aquatic plants that reduce algae and weeds. An aerator runs automatically three hours each day to keep movement and prevent the water from becoming stagnant.

It has taken four or five years for the chemicals to dissipate and for Wallace to get the lilies, float-

ing hearts, marginal plants, emergents (those half in and half out of the water) and other plants growing.

Three feet of lawn around the edge hasn't been mowed to provide cover for emerging frogs and an undercover for many plants that edge the pond and provide color — blue, pink, purple, yellow and white for much of the season — Agrimony, Swamp milkweed, Japanese Iris, Drawl Cattail, Pennywort and others. Ducks eat seeds of rushes and burr reeds provide a treat for waterfowl.

"What's really neat about a pond when you put fish in (sunfish, bluegills and chubs) you get a lot of wildlife," Wallace said.

A greenback and a great blue heron, a family of wood ducks, kingfishers, a snowy owl have visited at one time or another. Dragonflies, salamanders, toads, bullfrogs and green leopard frogs are quite at home. As a biological control for mosquitoes she uses BT (bacillus thuringiensis) tablets that don't harm other living things.

"Never spray or fertilize your

lawn that is close to a natural pond where it can get runoff, because algae bloom will form."

Basically the area is relatively easy to maintain. She weeds, removes unwanted plants such as burrs and small saplings and cuts seedheads off plants to control them.

Wallace, husband Richard and family have enjoyed all aspects of their pond. When the ice freezes, it makes a handy skating rink!

Digging in

In Canton, Laura O'Neill Messer started a backyard pond when she began digging a hole to "keep my frustration level down" through a divorce.

When it was six feet deep, she decided to build a pond. She calls it a "floating pond" because it heaves with the ground in the winter, thus little winter damage.

She filled the hole with "any piece of junk I could find" — broken concrete, etc. — then packed it with builders sand and let it set for two months. The sand settled and made a solid base. Womanized wood forms the back. After

setting the boards in holes, she cemented between each one, added wire mesh to the "wall" front and back, then painted it.

She cemented the sides and bottom of the pond, using a trowel and sometimes her hands, to get the cement smooth.

The seashell-shaped pond contains a figure of a girl standing on a tall pedestal and serves as a water fountain while providing sound as well as visual interest.

A hose directs water to provide oxygen and a filter also is used. Plants are artistically arranged and are growing in pots that are weighted with rocks. The pots are stuffed into the foot of old nylon hose so that the nylon covers the outside of the pot up to the rim. This keeps the dirt level at a minimum and is unobtrusive.

Boston ferns, papyrus grass, caladium, ribbon grass and an umbrella plant are removed in the fall and taken indoors, along with a water hyacinth. The hyacinth spreads rapidly and Messer buys a new one each year. She advises this as a first plant for beginners. Waterlilies and an arrowhead



Personal pond: Lydia Wallace has cultivated and encouraged a pond, plants and wildlife at her Birmingham home.

are set in three inches of water into a large, deep bucket, mulched heavily up to the rim of the bucket and set in a protected area of the yard to overwinter.

When fresh water is necessary, it sets 24 hours before the Koi are returned.

Last summer Laura and Jack

Messer were married at this lovely site.

Marty Figley is an advanced master gardener based in Birmingham. You can leave her a message by dialing 953-2047 on a touch-tone phone, then her mailbox number, 1859. Her fax number is 644-1314.

Home improvement ideas shown

Opportunities to improve your home from the inside to the outside will be plentiful at the Fall Remodeling Show opening Thursday, Sept. 30, at the Novi Expo Center, I-96 and Novi Road.

"The size of the show, the diversity and quality of the exhibits make this a great show," said Fred Capaldi, president of the non-profit Builders Association of Southeastern Michigan and of Capaldi Building Co. in Rochester Hills. BASM is the sponsor of the event. "It's a one-stop shopping opportunity for everything you need for your home and garden."

The show will be open through Sunday, Oct. 3. Hours are 2-10 p.m. Thursday-Friday, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Saturday, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Sunday. Admission is \$5 for adults, \$3 for children ages 6-12 and seniors, free for children under 6. Family tickets for two adults and accompanying children are available at Farmer Jack/A&P for \$8. Two-for-one admission

coupons good opening day are available at all Frank's Nursery & Craft stores. For more information, call 737-4478.

Members of the Metropolitan Detroit Landscape Association will display gardens, and homeowners will be able to buy evergreens, shrubs, perennials and chrysanthemums at the Nursery Sale. Artistic Lawn Maintenance of Farmington Hills is among the firms creating gardens. The nursery sale will include stock from Eaton Nursery of West Bloomfield and other firms.

Lawn care workshops will be conducted by NBC-TV's "Today Show" gardening commentator Jeff Ball, and visitors may ask questions at his "Yardening Academy" sponsored by Frank's Nursery & Crafts.

Many exhibitors will also be offering show specials to the value-conscious homeowner. Almost 200 exhibits will provide a one-stop shopping opportunity and include the latest products, technologies and services for kitchens, baths, doors,

windows, yard/garden furniture, remodeling, arts and crafts, decorative accessories, pets, electronics, heating, cooling and appliances.

Attendees may view expert demonstrations on decorating, home repair and remodeling, visit the "Home Show Pet Show" anchored by Pet Supplies Plus and win prizes in the Treasure Chest Contest. Contest prizes include a Schrock cherry vanity from Kitchens by Lenore & Richards of Birmingham and a karaoke system rental from Laserland of Novi.

Youngsters may visit with a purple dinosaur Oct. 2-3 at Church's Lumber Yards, pick up coloring sheets on pet care topics at the Michigan Humane Society and see a "Barney" vinyl wallpaper border at the Knoppow exhibit.

BASM also sponsors the International Builders Home, Flower, Furniture Show at the Cobo-Conference Exhibition Center and the Spring Home and Garden Show at the Novi Expo Center.

Southfield site of antiques show

The Southfield Pavilion Antiques Exposition will take place Friday-Sunday, Oct. 1-3, at the Southfield Civic Center, 26000 Evergreen at 10-1/4 Mile.

Hours are 2-9 p.m. Friday, noon to 8 p.m. Saturday and noon to 5 p.m. Sunday. Admission is \$4

with ads or listings of the event, \$5 regular. One paid admission is good for all three days of the show. Children age 12 and under admitted free.

The event has been called Michigan's most exciting and important antiques show and sale. A

diverse selection of fine American, European and Oriental antiques and fine art will be featured. Antiques dealers from across the country, noted authors and nationally known experts will exhibit and sell their antiques collections. Food and free parking will be available.

CCS sets music ensemble auditions

The Center for Creative Studies announces auditions for music ensembles sponsored by the Mitch Albom Dream Fund.

Established in 1990, the fund was created by award-winning Detroit Free Press columnist Mitch Albom through proceeds from annual sports celebrity roasts. Qualified students are eligible for ensemble scholarships as a result.

For scholarship information and to schedule an audition, call the School of Music at 872-3118, Ext. 619. All auditions will take place at the CCS-Institute of Mu-

sic and Dance, 200 E. Kirby in Detroit.

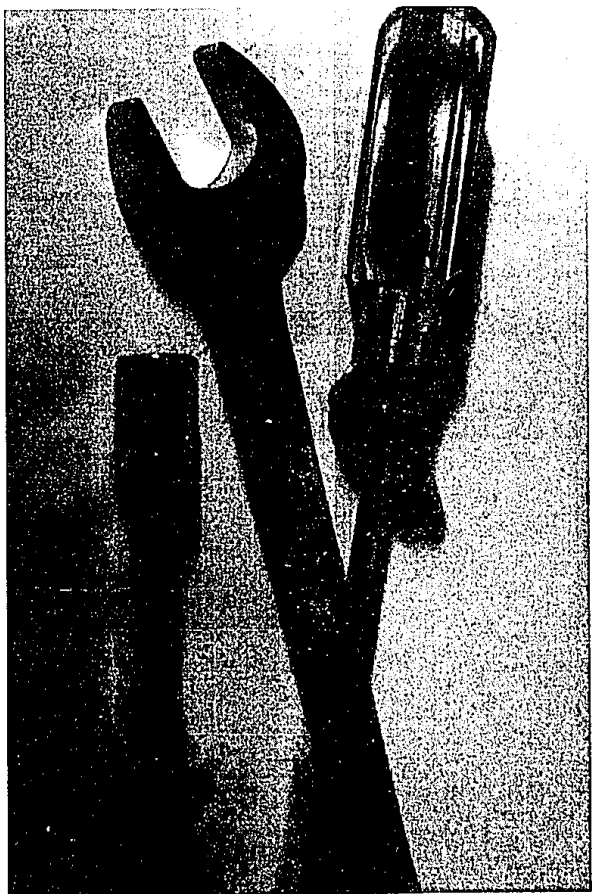
The ensembles, audition times and who may audition, are:

Children's choir, 2:30 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 25, ages 7-10; CCS Noontime Chorus, noon Monday, Sept. 27, adults; small classical ensembles, 4:30 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 29, ages 11-17 and adults; jazz performance ensemble, 6 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 29, ages 15 through adult; and youth choir, 6 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 30, ages 11-14.

The children's and youth choirs involve voice training and ensem-

ble singing. Both choirs present public performances. The CCS Noontime Chorus involves choral singing for mixed voices of traditional and contemporary repertoire.

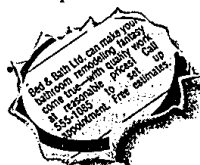
Small classical ensembles involve coaching and rehearsal for trios and quartets of standard and mixed instrumentation. Recitals and master classes are included. The jazz performance ensemble involves development of performance and ensemble techniques, and presentation of different styles including rhythm, song forms and blues.



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