

GARDEN SPOT

# Gardener's hard work yields stunning color



MARTY FIGLEY

Louise Barrows of Birmingham has averaged three hours each day for the past 14 years, during the growing season, working in her beautiful garden, and her dedication has reaped many rewards.

"When I first moved here there was all lawn, so to create the flower beds I dug out the sod and hammered the clumps of grass with a rake to release the soil which was almost like peat," she said.

This she put back in the beds to nourish the soil.

"When I want more flowers more lawn is removed."

Her gardens flow around the house and are very colorful. Although she uses some annuals, she is striving to grow mostly perennials. The colors all blend together to create a harmonious picture. She prefers not to use white because "color is more cheerful — there is more life to it."

There are a lot of roses in the gardens such as ramblers and old-fashioned varieties. There aren't any hybrids. Colors range from white, deep pink/cerise, salmon, light pink and red. They are interspersed among other plants. Yarrow, foxglove, dames' rocket, clematis, iris, daisies, weigla, spiraea, sedum, columbine, rose of Sharon, liatris, daylilies (one clump took four years to bloom — "It must have heard me, when I said I was going to rip them out!").

Also dwarf salvia and lots of Sweet William. Louise explained that to in-

crease the supply of Sweet William she scratches the soil around the plants and then shakes the bloom to release the seed when she notices them going to seed, usually sometime in July. She then lets the rain set them down into the soil to the depth they want to be. In September, when they are about four inches tall, she divides them and sets them in their proper places. Some new plants form near the mother plant and she also saves them. These are biennials, so this procedure allows her to have bloom each season. The seeds don't come true, but, she said, "I don't care."

She also grows spiderwort, which reseeds itself and spreads from the roots. She said that this a good plant for new gardeners because it's very hardy and never gets buggy. Because it is so prolific, seedlings are pulled out to make space for other plants.

Two clematis, one blue and one purple, grow happily together near the back door. She prunes the Jackmani after it blooms and believes it's best to just leave them alone. She fertilizes in the spring, but uses no acid. The roots are kept cool. She is trying a new bush form clematis, Davidiana, hyacinth blue that is protected by wire fencing.

The roses are sprayed when she sees a problem — especially aphids — and they are fed in the spring, early summer and mid-July. By this time it's time to harden them off, because now growth is "too green to go to sleep — they're frost tender."

Various conifers are, strategically placed for winter interest and provide distraction in the garden when the flowers aren't blooming. Along the side of the house an inner garden provides a



MARTY FIGLEY

In flower: Louise Barrows of Birmingham says "Gardening is my favorite thing to do."

place for her Dalmatian, Chip, to run. It is edged with flower beds.

She waters every other day when it is hot, although she warns then you can overdo the watering. She has found that most success comes from plants that thrive well in zones 3 and 4 and that those for zone 5 need a protected area.

Louise's father encouraged her gardening interest.

"I am always amazed that from that tiny black seed will come such beautiful things," she said. "Gardening is my life right now — my favorite thing to do."

Marty Figley is an advanced master gardener based in Birmingham. You can leave her a message by dialing (313) 953-2047 on a touch-tone phone, then her mailbox number, 1859. Her fax number is (810) 644-1314.

## Daylily enthusiasts gather in Troy

BY MARTY FIGLEY  
SPECIAL WRITER

"Outside of roses, daylilies are the most popular perennial flower grown over much of the country. The results of breeding can be seen within two years," said Hal Rice of Birmingham.

Rice is a director and chairman of the Awards and Honors Committee on the national level of the American Hemerocallis Society and is chairman of the upcoming Region 2 meeting, which will take place Friday-Sunday, July 14-16, in Troy.

The Great Lakes Region includes Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois and Wisconsin; local members are from the whole metropolitan area and live as far away as Albion (west), Bay City (north), Toledo (south) and Mount Clemens (east).

Participants will tour nine gardens, and attend training sessions to become garden and exhibition judges. Training

for youths is also conducted at this time. Trained garden judges vote the ballot to select winners in the Awards and Honors category. They look for flower form, branching, height, hardiness, substance, color for sunfastness, when flowering occurs and duration of bloom. Exhibition judges judge cultivars in shows, primarily single stem specimens.

One program will be a slide presentation of new introduction by hybridizers, followed by a plant auction. Elias Bakalar, author of "A Garden of One's Own," will be the featured speaker at the dinner. She designs borders and gardens using daylilies to their best advantage. Call Juergen Kasprick at (810) 624-2072 for information.

Rice explained that there are three kinds of daylilies. Evergreen like the deep South conditions because the foliage keeps growing all year; they don't flower all year, however. Semi-evergreen

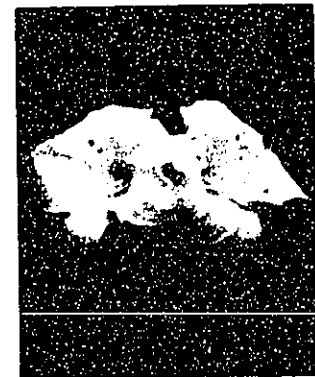
tolerates cold better than the first kind; they are used in Zone 4 areas. Dormant kinds tolerate the cold temperatures; they stop growing in cold weather. It is safest to grow the semi-evergreen or dormant in this zone. Ask your nurseryman for advice.

"Because of hybridizing daylilies can be universally grown in all regions of this country," said Al Goldner of Bloomfield Hills. "Thirty years ago the

See DAYLILY, 17D

### CLARIFICATION

Last week's story on Cranbrook House should have said guided tours are available 1:30 and 3 p.m. Sundays and 1) a.m. and 1:15 p.m. Thursdays through September. Call (810) 645-3149 for information.



MARTY FIGLEY

Popular perennial: Daylilies will be the focus of the Region 2 meeting. Shown here is the "Fred Knocke" orange daylily.