

Garden

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think that there was something special going on. The stop, and all the other landscapes were designed by Uwe, Diane says. "He is my hard-core man. He installed it all with the exception of the front walk."

The front landscaping is a beautiful blend of colors, both annuals and perennials. Outstanding evergreens, a blue globe spruce at one corner and at the other, a Hissel cypress, are good choices. Annuals include white, purple and red million bells, phlox, little blue and white violets, miniature nicotiana, and a hibiscus that self-seeds. Along the edge is white alyssum, pink vinca and blue ageratum. Perennials include white canna lilies, iris, a tall purple aster, conifers, as well as several grasses, such as a striped variegated miscanthus.

The porch is a half-round made of the same pavers as the walk; the edges are constructed of white stones to hold a vast assortment of potted plants in white stone containers.

The back yard is ringed with flow-

er beds that contain a wide assortment of plants that repeat from the front and side gardens. Some of them are hollyhocks, lilies, blue Russian sage, hot pink phlox, light pink obedient plant, butterfly bush and more. Diane's favorite color is white, so much is used. Many colors which "I love" with their variegated foliage is used throughout all the beds on each side of the yard. These curving beds are lined with gray bricks, set on their sides.

One large, old, ornamental cherry tree is a show throughout the seasons. In the spring, the leaves are bright green and as the summer progresses, they slowly change to a deep purple. On one side of the yard a Peegee hydrangea, white goat's beard, a tall blue spruce and two large pine trees give the gardens a permanent feel.

Uwe built a storage shed, located in the corner of the back yard. It, too, is painted gray. Years ago, the couple planted a row of arbutus along the back of the property. This

'hedge' is now at least 30 feet tall and is a perfect backdrop for the vegetable garden. A black wrought iron arch and double gates lead to this garden in which peas, tomatoes, cukes, lettuce, radishes and beets grow. They mulch this garden with straw to eliminate weeding.

An array of containers sits on the small back stoop, one of which is a hypertufa garden with alpine, such as a dwarf spruce, spirea, Irish moss, a blue spruce, barberry, and thyme. Diane says, "I trim these plants constantly and water it twice a week."

Tucked into a corner are hostas, spirea, tall ageratum, a rugosa rose (trimmed in the spring to keep it small), an annual penta and a red Japanese maple. Climbing up a post is a mandevilla vine with deep pink blooms.

The yard is completely fenced. It is covered with vines, including moonflower, morning glories and 15 different clematis.

Water garden

The piece de resistance is a simply beautiful water garden and pergola. The pergola is dressed with a

shiny wrought iron table and two chairs, where the couple sit to enjoy the fish and the ambience of the garden. The pergola, also constructed by Uwe, is covered with several vines: another mandevilla, a purple passion flower, sweet peas, and a pink Montana clematis. Ferns, hostas and other shade lovers grow around three sides. A lovely black wrought iron fence encloses it all. Tiger slate was used around the pond and at the gate, which adds another dimension to this garden.

The kidney-shaped pond holds 1,200 gallons of water and is approximately 15 feet by 6 feet in size and 24 inches deep at the deepest part, so the fish can over-winter outdoors as can many of the plants. This is another of Uwe's projects. The bright orange koi and golden fish are happy in their home. Shelves were built in the pond to hold containers of water plants, including cannas, a purple tropical lily, and lotus. Around the perimeter, reed grasses and variegated papyrus are growing. To deter blue herons from stealing the fish, Uwe strung about five lines of fishing line from the roof line of the home to

the top of the pergola, and they are working.

He bought a kit to make paving stones (which they tinted gray) to connect the concrete area directly off the porch with the tiger slate in the pond garden making a nice contrast.

The gardening season begins in April and the garden is tucked in for the winter in October. There is very little maintenance in this intensive garden other than watering in the early morning, deadheading each evening, and feeding the fish. Three inches of compost from the Birmingham recycling yard is applied each spring so there are very few weeds and no need for fertilizer. In fact, many flowers self-sow because of the rich soil. The pond plants are cut back to the lowest node and set on the bottom of the pond for winter. Tropicals are taken indoors. Many hummingbirds and butterflies visit and Diane says, "One day there were 60-60 butterflies in the spirea bush and soon were covering Uwe's red shirt!"

The evening scene is quite spectacular with night lighting in the front and back yards and under the

pond.

Diane says, "I share with everybody; gardening is sharing. It's a labor of love."

"It's winter, but every gardener knows this is the time to plan, and get ready for the growing season. Invite us to see your garden. We're busy cultivating new writers and gardeners to feature in *At Home*. Send pictures of your garden, along with a self-addressed stamped envelope if you'd like your photos returned, and explanation of why your garden is simply spectacular to - Keely Kaleski Wygonik, Assistant Managing Editor of Features, Observer & Eccentric Newspaper, 3525 Schoolcraft, Livonia #148160. E-mail information, as a text file, or copy and paste into e-mail to wygonik@ec.homecomm.net. Wygonik can be reached at our Livonia office (734) 953-2105 on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, or at our Birmingham office (248) 901-2587 on Tuesday and Thursday.

Marty Figley is an advanced master gardener based in Birmingham. Look for her weekly column in *At Home*.

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Island

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is to create one spot that is suitable for all forms of dining. And to make better use of kitchen islands and snack bars

for serving and enjoying meals. A change in lighting and ceiling heights, plus an upgrade of the kitchen's overall appear-

ance, allows the kitchen-dining area to meet many needs, as it becomes the new family room. A lower ceiling and dim lighting can transform everyday meals into elegant soirees, while islands and snack bars replace the traditional buffet

for easier meal service. Also, when open to the other living areas, they allow the family chef to be a part of group activities.

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