

## **“Blooms, Birds, and Butterflies”**

### **2025 Riley County Extension Master Gardener 36<sup>th</sup> Annual Garden Tour**

#### **Kansas State University Gardens, 1500 Denison Avenue**

The K-State Gardens is celebrating their 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year! The Gardens is an invaluable learning laboratory for K-State students and a welcoming place for visitors of all ages. Besides the plant material, there are sculptures, water features, and numerous arbors and benches located throughout the Gardens. The K-State Gardens are open to the public year-round with free admission and parking. In the past year, the first phase of the reflecting pool was completed on the north side of the Gardens.

Proceeds from this 36<sup>th</sup> annual garden tour help support the Gardens. Four garden collection areas are featured on this year's tour and a Master Gardener will be stationed at the Rose, Butterfly, Cottage, and Native Adaptive Gardens to talk about the features of each garden and answer questions.

#### **Jim and Sally Lindquist, 1500 Sharingbrook Drive**

With over 250 hostas, 130 trees, and 450 shrubs, this qualifies as a large home garden. Jim was a Riley County Extension Agent from 1974-1989, and started the Riley County Extension Master Gardener program in 1988. He therefore had a wealth of landscaping knowledge when their home was completed in 1995. Initially, this pasture turned home landscape consisted of 100 native cedar trees, and Jim added other trees as the years progressed. Once the lower branches of the cedars were trimmed up, Jim and Sally had the area below the trees available to plant shade-loving perennials such as ferns and hostas. They also created a more park-like setting by placing benches, swings, and chairs in opportune locations around the yard. Jim and Sally's favorite places to view their landscape is sitting on the swing by the bed of begonias and coneflowers, the Meditation Garden with its arched trellises and sculptures, and on the large patio or in the house viewing their multi-level waterfall. The multi-stemmed ash at the top of the waterfall as well as the chokecherry trees behind the patio are some of their favorite plants. Jim recommends trimming up cedar branches and using the newly created space beneath each tree for planting beds. Mulching these areas makes them more attractive and keeps the weeds under control.

#### **Sarah and Christopher Uher, 2920 Hickory Ct.**

With the native plants and trees in Warner Park at the rear of their backyard (80% of which was invasive honeysuckle!), along with a limestone ridge that parallels their house, the Uher's started working on clearing out the brush in the lower backyard during the winter of 2018-19. There is also a storm drain on the east side of their upper backyard that deposits rainwater collected from the street and the Uher's made it into a much more attractive "dry stream bed" when it is not raining. Sarah has added perennials on both sides of that bed, along with some smaller ornamental trees and shrubs. The front yard has a nice collection of perennials, small shrubs, and annuals. The west side of the yard has an Autumn Brilliance Serviceberry and a variegated-leaved Sugar Tip Rose of Sharon. As you reach the backyard, you'll come to the shade garden with a Coral Bark Japanese maple and other shade-loving plants. Sarah has been gardening for about 25 years, of which 6 were spent at this current location. Sarah's best advice to other gardeners is to use mulch to reduce weeds. Also, if a plant isn't thriving, move it or try something else! The Uher's favorite place to view their garden is from their back patio with the fountain running. She reports that it is a great place to watch birds coming to their garden.

#### **Cynthia Webster and Fred Tennison, 226 Ridge Drive**

With nearly 40 years of gardening experience under their belts, Cynthia and Fred moved from Minnesota to Manhattan in 2021. Work began in their current garden in the Spring of 2022 with the complete removal of three large trees in their backyard with the intention of making their landscape friendly towards butterflies, birds, and bees. To create a green barrier between their backyard and the neighbor's backyard to the west, they planted a row of 20-25 arborvitae. However, they didn't expect to have to contend with the massive root systems that the removed trees left behind and how those hidden roots impacted planting and water runoff in the yard the following summers. Cynthia recommends you allow adequate time to deal with issues like that. As an added benefit, Cynthia feels like her backyard is a sunken garden as you stand on the upper ridge behind the arborvitae. (Yes, you can check it out yourself on the tour!) Cynthia and Fred have made tremendous progress over the past 3 growing seasons. The formerly treed yard now has many sun-loving perennials like peonies, exotic lilies, hydrangeas, Husker Red penstemon, butterfly milkweed, butterfly bush, gaillardia, and many others. The tree removal also allowed the addition of annuals such as zinnias and dahlias. A small vegetable garden is located in the backyard. Cynthia and Fred were able to successfully transplant several David Austin rosebushes from their former garden in Minnesota. Their favorite place to view their garden is on their side porch on the south end of their house. From there they can view the birds, butterflies, and bees that are attracted to their many flower garden beds and to interact with neighbors who are out for an evening stroll.

### **Frank Schmeidler and Ralph Diaz, 412 Kearney Street**

It's been 13 years since Frank and Ralph's garden has been on our garden tour. Several years ago, though, a much larger garage was built to replace the small one they had. But to accommodate its size and location, the very large ash tree and a paperbark maple had to be removed. It also necessitated the temporary removal of shrubs, hostas, and other perennials. Frank dutifully dug them up and laid the plants with their root masses in a different area to wait out the construction. He surrounded the root masses with lots of mulch and watered them extensively throughout that summer. Now those plants have had an opportunity to reestablish themselves. Frank describes their garden as an assemblage of "collections"; they have around 100 daylily varieties, about 60 cultivars of hosta, 18 conifers, 26 hydrangeas, 26 cultivars of intersectional and tree peonies, various lilies (LA hybrid, Oriental, Asiatic, Turks Head, Asiatic-Oriental, Orienpet, and Trumpet), and 5 Japanese maples. Ralph and Frank's favorite areas of their garden is the backyard, which can also be viewed from their dining room. Sitting under the Beni Otake Japanese maple on the patio and listening to the splashing fountain is another favorite activity. Finally, the backyard is the location of their hydrangea walk where you can sit and relax on the lion bench. Frank's advice is that when you are looking for a small tree, think about limbing/pruning up a large shrub. This not only saves you money, but saves the overgrown shrub from getting ripped out. Alternatively, you can buy a potted shrub, that has a strong leader, and limb it up as it grows. Frank also saves money by dividing plants, especially the ground covers and ferns.

### **John and Jelane Cook, 3005 Timbercreek Pwky.**

John's first garden in Mississippi in 1976 was eaten to the ground by the neighbor's cows. Luckily, John and Jelane don't have to worry about that happening to their current garden which has been "under construction" since 1993. They started from scratch with a gently sloping lawn with thin topsoil. Unfortunately, that gentle slope across the property serves as an outlet for the flow of rainwater from the neighborhood, but John and Jelane have skillfully incorporated flow reduction measures into their landscape design. Then several years ago, a car accident at their corner resulted in the demise of a large pin oak tree and shrubs. John decided to create a pollinator garden planted with native and nativar flowering plants. While John says it can be challenging to source native plants and seeds, when you get it right, it requires no supplemental fertilizer and virtually no supplemental water. John's selections and care for that corner garden make it an intentional, attractive and ecologically friendly part of their landscape. It's one of his favorite places, while Jelane enjoys the annual plantings in other parts of the yard. They have 7 "rooms" in their yard which include an herb garden, hosta garden, and one in annuals, plus a "bonus garden" across the street. A tree died there and the neighbors asked if John could do some native plantings there also. It's now one year old. Lastly, a new feature this year is a wood, stone, and metal sculpture commissioned by Jelane and created by a good friend to commemorate their love of gardening and John's 75<sup>th</sup> birthday.