

2022 Arkansas Master Gardener State Conference Garden Tours

Garden Tour Overview

Quilts are a beloved part of Ozark history. With a nod to our ancestors, we've named our three "Ozark Adventure" garden tours after historic quilt patterns that were among those published in the Kansas City *Star* newspaper from 1928 until 1961. Many Ozark folks read the *Star* and our grandmothers and great-grandmothers especially looked forward to clipping the quilt patterns that were a regular feature in the paper. The quilt blocks pictured here are as they looked in the *Star*.



"Building Blocks"

(Kansas City *Star* quilt pattern, 1933.) Homes in Fayetteville's historic district and Mount Sequoyah environs are the building blocks for gardens highlighting pollinator habitats, heirloom plants, and native grasses. The owners have planned their gardens with an eye toward adaptability to rocky hillsides, respect for the history and character of the neighborhood, and sustainability of native flora and fauna.

- **Hillside Garden** - *Tom and Jill King are the owners of Hillside Garden. Jill is a member of the Washington County Master Gardeners Class of 2010.*

Jill and Tom King's house, which was designed and built by Fay Jones, one of Frank Lloyd Wright's best-known disciples, is built on a very steep hillside. Jones carried out the principles of organic design, use of native materials, attention to crafted details, and seamless integration of building to site. The King home, along with many of Jones's buildings including Thorncrown Chapel in Eureka Springs, is on the National Register of Historic Places. The house makes a striking backdrop to the mostly native plantings surrounding it. The steeply sloping, stony, dry, and deeply shaded hillside posed a problem for the Kings when they purchased the property in 2008. They quickly decided that it was not suitable for a conventional garden. Instead, working with landscape gardener Stuart Fulbright, they made a landscape of trails punctuated with native grasses and shrubs. It is a great place to wander.

The hillside to the east of the house is heavily planted with daffodils which bloom for months starting in mid-February. Vinca minor groundcover blooms at the same time, making a medley of blues and yellows. As springtime arrives, the hillside is thick with many types of wildflowers, including toothwort, spring beauty, bloodwort, native trilliums, and Jack-in-the-pulpit. In May the buckeyes sport showy red plumes. When the Kings manage to prevent the deer from eating them, the oakleaf hydrangeas are spectacular. The grasses take over as summer develops. Several native American hollies help provide

structure. There are numerous examples of a particularly good cultivar, Mrs. Hahn, that has especially deep green and glossy leaves. These were all brought in as large plants from Tennessee.

The hillside to the west of the house is treated differently. The soil here is better and there is less shade. This area features a variety of native blooming plants as well as grasses and shrubs. A simple trail system around the property is interrupted by interesting bamboo sculptures, illuminated at night. The open area to the west of the studio is treated as a native meadow, sown with many kinds of wildflowers. The Cunningham fir to the north of the house is unusual in this climate zone.

- **Porches with a View** - *John and Talya Boerner are the owners of Porches with a View. Talya is a member of the Washington County Master Gardeners Class of 2019*

We purchased our home in the Washington-Willow neighborhood of Fayetteville in 2014. In 2015, we began a complete renovation of the landscaping. Our goal is to provide a healthy habitat for birds, bees, butterflies, and other pollinators with as many native plants as possible and without chemicals.

Over time, our yard has evolved into a series of garden areas visible from the front wraparound and back screened-in porches. A variety of plants flourish, including natives, which create year-round interest. Individual beds have names, such as the Woodland Garden with redbud, dogwood, and maple trees, columbine flowers, Schip laurel, and shade-tolerant oakleaf hydrangea. The backyard Pollinator Garden (designated a Monarch Waystation) attracts butterflies with various perennials, including coneflowers, milkweeds, salvias, autumn sage, and liatris. Herbs grown throughout the Pollinator Garden feed humans and caterpillars alike. Two vintage flamingoes watch over the Water Garden. In spring, daffodils and crocus are the first to wake, followed by blooming Leatherleaf and Korean Spice viburnum and varieties of bearded iris. Summertime color comes from a white Natchez crape myrtle, roses, daylilies, and black-eyed Susans. Flowering annuals spill over pots and planters. Hostas and coral bells are plentiful. In fall, lavender mums and an explosion of asters give way to the changing leaf colors of Japanese maples and large, mature shade trees. Boxwoods and soft-touch hollies provide winter structure until Lenten roses stir.

As porches and landscape blend, our garden is meant to be enjoyed. Friends and neighbors become porch lingerers where they can sip a refreshment, wave at walkers and their dogs, or check to see what book was selected from the Little Free Library (which includes a seed exchange and is a geocache site as well). We are simply caretakers of our small corner of the world. And sharing this space with dogs, birds, pollinators, squirrels, rabbits, opossums, and the occasional deer and mole is how we imagine a garden should be enjoyed.

- **Serenity Shade** - *Lee Ann and Mike Wiederkehr are the owners of Serenity Shade.*

Lee Anne and Mike Wiederkehr are the current stewards of Serenity Shade which they purchased in 2019 from the Carroll family, who were the second owners of the house built on two-thirds of an acre in 1963. Carolyn Carroll's design acumen is demonstrated in stone walls and paths, white flowering dogwoods, southern and tulip magnolias, Japanese maples, and boxwoods in the midst of an existing grove of oak trees.

A too-shaded front lawn area has been converted to a large moss garden. Boxwoods, Snow Kurume azaleas, and Girard's Pleasant azaleas were added to hide the street curb.

The northern edge of the property features a stand of bamboo supplemented by the addition of Bracken brown magnolias. Other plantings include arrowwood viburnum, Rose of Sharon, 'Christom' Blue Muffin viburnum, mountain laurel, 'Henry's Garnet' itea, and Japanese flowering quince. Kousa dogwoods and redbuds add to the naturalistic edge and provide a mid-story.

A stone path leads to a pergola covered deck. Plantings of dwarf Japanese maples, American elms, boxwoods, dwarf yaupon hollies, and groundcover green the path. The deck is framed by crape myrtles and two glorious red maples.

Forsythia frames the back lawn dappled with daffodils and Kousa dogwoods. Masses of Limelight hydrangeas, 'Summer Snowflake' doublefile viburnum and Savannah hollies add a green foil to quiet views of the structure to the west.

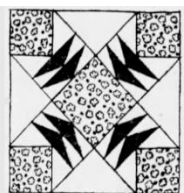
Every garden has challenges from nature. Not far from Serenity Shade is Deer Hollow where a heard of whitetail deer live and come to visit when they are hungry. What they don't eat, they attack with their antlers during mating season. Metal fencing protects established plants. However, "habitat" can be thrilling when a majestic eight-point buck wanders through, a turtle strolls by, hawks nest in the trees above, and playful birds and squirrels look like an animated scene from *Snow White*.

- **Headquarters House** - *The Washington County Historical Society owns and operates Headquarters House.*

Built in 1853 by Judge Jonas Tebbetts and his wife, Matilda Winlock Tebbetts, Headquarters House is one of the best examples of Greek Revival architecture still standing in Arkansas. The name of the house comes from its role as headquarters for both Union and Confederate armies at various times during the Civil War.

In 1996, the Washington County Historical Society (WCHS) asked the Washington County Master Gardeners (WCMG) to help design and plant twin perennial borders in the front lawn of Headquarters House as the plantings would have looked in the 1850s. In 1997, Headquarters House became WCMG's first sanctioned project to be established outside the Washington County Extension Service campus.

Over the years, the Headquarters House project has grown to include 16 different period-correct themed gardens, including perennial and annual plants, herbs, shrubs and trees for both sun and shade, rose garden, butterfly garden, moon garden, shady woodland, heirloom vegetables, and container garden. WCMG volunteers work closely with the WCHS Historic Gardening Committee to design and develop historically accurate gardens. Both WCMG and WCHS agree that the key to the continued success of this 24-year sanctioned project is "communication, communication, communication!"



"Ozark Trail"

(Kansas City *Star* quilt pattern, 1935.) Ozark hills and valleys are home to gardens that include water features, a labyrinth, and an apple orchard. The owners invite you to explore the agrarian roots of the Ozark as well as the artistic and whimsical side of gardening.

- **Giardino di Fiori** - *Virgil and Gail Pianalto are the owners of Giardino di Fiori. Gail is a member of the Washington County Master Gardeners Class of 2008.*

Welcome to the 25-year-old garden that moved across the highway from our previous home. We may have had to leave our hundred-year-old trees, but we transplanted pretty much everything else.

This is where Virgil grew up. His mother's maiden name was Fiori, which in Italian means "flower." When it came time to name our new garden, there could only be one choice. Giardino di Fiori translates to "Garden of Flowers."

We have several gardens throughout the property. You'll find the Secret Garden behind the future She Shed. You may also want to look in front of the She Shed to see if you can find where our fairies live. There's the Playhouse Garden, the Birdwatching Porch Garden, and a Monarch Waystation Garden. We are starting our own little arboretum of native trees on the back west side. The front garden is enclosed by a picket fence and has roses, perennials of all kinds, and some of my favorite clematis. Although we don't have a large vegetable garden, we do grow vegetables in containers. We also have a Three Sisters Garden next to the playhouse.

Virgil built the water garden using native rocks that I personally handpicked over the last 25 years. And yes, my rocks came with us.

Although the garden is about 70% native, there are also some 80 roses, with most being old garden roses and David Austin English roses. The roses are grown organically. We don't use anything that would bring harm to our wildlife. They are just as much a part of our garden as the plants.

Before you leave you may want to stop by the old lichen-covered car for a fun photo with your friends as a lasting memory of your "Ozark Adventure."

- **HollyWood Gardens** - *Holly Childs is the owner of HollyWood Gardens. She is a member of the Washington County Master Gardeners Class of 2005.*
"If you don't lose about a third of your new plants every year, you aren't being adventurous enough."

—Gordon Hartrick (1915–2014), my father

Visiting gardeners will doubtless see lots of annuals marking sites that prove I am plenty adventurous with my new perennials. I have 17 mostly wooded acres with way too many garden areas, a deep ravine with springs, more rocks than dirt, deer, pH 3.2, and many invasives. My property is Audubon Gold Certified Bird Friendly, with nesting pileated woodpeckers. At the bottom of the hill, there are pawpaws and hazelnuts; native bittersweet (*Celastrus scandens*) on the rockwork; and blood lilies (*Haemanthus*), sweet Joe-Pye weed (*Eupatorium* or *Eutrochium purpureum*), and cinnamon wild indigo (*Baptisia*) in the gardens.

The gardens around the house at the top of the driveway feature an 85-foot diameter labyrinth, a peaceful back yard with fountain, a wildflower border by the oak-hickory woods, and other garden areas.

Shortly after we moved into our new retirement home in 2003, we built the first garden—the labyrinth with mostly perennial ornamentals between the paths (only one path—it's a labyrinth, not a maze). The labyrinth is built on a site we designated as a helicopter landing pad, if I ever need to use the helicopter medical evacuation insurance that my late husband bought. I couldn't see leaving a big empty barren patch beside our house, and my daughter-in-law suggested a labyrinth. The plants there are supposed to be squashable in case the helicopter does have to land.

You may see snakes-head iris (*Hermodactylus tuberosus*), odd alliums such as *Allium karaviense* (which looks like a big egg on a platter), hybrid Alpine strawberries, pineapple lilies (*Eucomis*), and wild ginger (*Asarum canadense*), as well as normal iris, dianthus, creeping phlox, hydrangeas, and coneflowers.

Near the fountain and in the back yard are Louisiana iris 'Red Velvet Elvis', a native wahoo tree (*Euonymus atropurpureus*), a clump of banana trees and 12-foot peppermint stick grass (*Arundo donax*) on a berm, a large scholar tree (*Sophora japonica*), yellow-foliage *Boehmeria*, and a handkerchief tree (*Davidia involucrata*) that should be ready to bloom. Several of the interesting plants here came from Plant Delights.

You may walk the labyrinth, or venture into the woods to see if the wild viburnum or the mayapples are blooming or sit in a rocking chair and listen to the fountain.

- **Rutherford Farm** - *Chuck and Donilyn Rutherford are the owners of Rutherford Farm. Chuck is a member of the Washington County Master Gardeners Class of 2007; Donilyn is a member of the Class of 2015.*

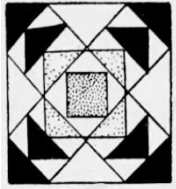
Chuck and Donilyn Rutherford are living their retirement dream of growing and selling their organically grown produce both at the Fayetteville Farmer's Market and directly from their farm. Even before retirement, they were vendors at the market. In 2019 the Rutherfords purchased the farm, which was formerly owned by well-known horticulturalist Carl Totemeier. That's when Chuck and Donilyn "retired" and really started to work! They are the third owners of the farm since Carl passed away in 2004, and it is the Rutherfords' goal to return the farm to its heyday of the Totemeier years.

Significantly, Carl Totemeier bought the property in the 1980s while he was living in New York and rebuilding the rose gardens in Central Park and at the Rockefeller estate. Before retiring and moving to Arkansas, Carl was the director of the New York Botanical Garden (NYBG). He was later the first director of the Botanical Garden of the Ozarks.

The farm is rich in horticulture history. For example, the ginkgo trees started out as seeds from China that Carl salvaged from NYBG and the chestnut trees along the road were seeds from the Rockefeller estate. The only tree that was there when Carl bought the property is a catalpa which is said to have been there during the Civil War. Carl also planted a large orchard where he tried to grow the perfect apple tree. Each of the 500 apple trees he planted were somewhat different. Today there are approximately 50 apple trees left.

The Rutherfords have added a fruit garden with rhubarb, elderberries, black raspberries, blackberries, honeyberries, pomegranates, concord grapes, muscadines, figs, a pear tree, and a cherry tree so Donilyn can make jams and jellies for the Farmer's Market. They have a nursery license to sell fig trees and blackberry, black raspberry, and strawberry plants. They grow and sell plants and vegetables such as

tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, and winter squash. The Rutherfords also sell eggs produced by 100 or so chickens housed in a former horse barn.



"Rambler"

(Kansas City *Star* quilt pattern, 1928.) It's a worldwide ramble through gardens with influences from the British Isles, Japan, and the shady forests of Asia. The owners use their life experiences before coming to the Ozark to guide their present-day garden and landscape designs.

- **Dingley Dell** - *Elaine Mills and Keith Blowers are the owners of Dingley Dell. Elaine is a member of the Washington County Master Gardeners Class of 2013; Keith is a member of the Class of 2020.*

"In the shade of the magic glade down in Dingley Dell." This quote from Monty Python is a perfect description of what you will find in the garden of Elaine Mills and Keith Blowers. Paths run everywhere up and down the shady hillside with dozens of plantings that reminds one of walking through a glade. Not to mention how magical it is as seating areas and other surprises meet you at every turn. There are dozens of hydrangeas throughout.

The Victorian house with its wraparound porch makes the perfect backdrop for the many sunny gardens and water features. Alliums are everywhere in all shapes and sizes as these are one of Elaine's many passions. Large stone pots with Elaine's talented designs are located throughout the gardens.

Keith is more passionate about vegetables as can be seen by the numerous raised beds dedicated to growing tomatoes, peppers, and much more. Another interest of Keith is azaleas. The Arkansas Azalea Society chose one area of the property to plant several Carden-Harris Hybrid Legacy Azaleas including Margaret Red, Single Purple, Garden's Purple, Red Kaempferi, Frill White, Marie's Purple, Martha, and more.

- **Hosta La Vista** - *Judy Hyden is the owner of Hosta La Vista. She is a member of the Washington County Master Gardeners Class of 2015.*

I was a Master Gardener in northern Delaware for eight years. The zones are the same and conditions are similar to northwest Arkansas. I packed up an entire truckload of my favorite plants and moved them to Arkansas. The growing season here is two weeks longer so they have done well.

When we moved into this house seven years ago, there was virtually no landscaping. Since 2014, I have created sunny beds and a part-shade garden. My landscape plan was to design most beds in contours around existing fencing to facilitate easy lawn-mowing. I reserved a large sunny spot in the center of my backyard for a raised bed vegetable garden. The vegetable garden is planted with spring crops such as spinach, lettuce, radishes and onions. I add tomatoes, peppers, okra, and squash for the summer months.

The shade garden features epimedium, trillium, hellebores, Solomon's seal, and, of course, hostas. Heucheras, some azaleas, brunnera, and hydrangeas complete the beds. The sunny garden includes irises, peonies, daisies, and echinacea. I add poppies, zinnias, marigolds, and geraniums for color.

Due to an erosion problem on the south side of the house, I created a casual rock garden interspersed with grasses that works quite well. I have a hidden compost area.

My back seating area is terraced rock with flowers and shrubs planted at different levels. This contoured area contains a multitude of bulbs in the spring and it's virtually solid with impatiens in the summer and fall. This is my favorite spot to sit and enjoy morning coffee and watch the birds.

- **Seven Oaks** - *Cathy and Mike Schermer are the owners of Seven Oaks.*

We named our garden "Seven Oaks" because of the beautiful oak trees that attracted us to the property when we moved here in 2014 from Colorado. At that time, we had the oak trees, a mole-ridden lawn, a few landscape plants in the front, and an acre of potential garden. We drew up a long-range dream plan for the garden and continue to dream, work, play and try not to get discouraged when killing freezes, not enough rain, and critters that are not invited challenge us!

We started with planting shrubs and understory trees. Some of our favorites are the oakleaf hydrangeas, dogwoods, several varieties of viburnums, Japanese maples, and a Colorado blue spruce. We found a sunny spot to build a raised-bed kitchen garden, not paying any attention to the neighbors' slowly dying black walnut tree looming nearby. We added stone and crushed granite paths that invite you through the garden. In one corner you will come to "Grandmother" tree, our enormous and oldest oak tree. If you rest on the bench swing hanging from one of her branches you will see the Japanese tea house on the other side of the garden. Surrounding the tea house is a shade garden where beautiful large craggy rocks hang out with hostas, ferns, various shade groundcovers, and Japanese maples. In the flower beds we use lavender, Russian sage, hardy begonias, daylilies, re-blooming iris, peonies, heucheras, and succulents. We have a tuberose near our front entrance that smells like heaven when in bloom.

You are welcome to visit my art studio which opens into the back garden. Except for help with leaves and mulching in the fall, my husband (age 83) and I (age 76) do the gardening. Keeping a garden connects us to nature and keeps us young and strong, although sometimes our backs disagree about the young and strong part.

We hope you enjoy seeing our efforts at gardening in Northwest Arkansas.

Happy Gardening!