

Gardens on Tour Review

On Wednesday, June 15, 2005 the weather changed, the temperature dropped, and the sun came out just in time for us to enjoy the evening WHPS garden tour. Five beautiful gardens were open for touring in the Nakoma area.

Craig Bolles gardens on a large corner lot on Manitou Way features shady perennial borders, including an impressive, and growing, Rhododendron collection, several clematis vines, and Kalmias (mountain laurels) that were in full bloom, a sight not often seen around here.

Jeff Gepner's backyard garden on Seneca Place has been recently renovated to include multi-leveled hardscaping, and features a large stoneware water feature bubbling over onto a terrace with perennial plantings to add intimacy and drama to the space. A yellow flowering Clematis (tangutica?) mingled in the front of the house with a beautiful and vigorous Wisteria (macrostachys 'Aunt Dee?').

Containers of all sizes and shapes brimming with specimen flowering and foliage plants greets the visitor to Frank Greer's woodland garden on Waban Hill. The back garden features a striking colony of *Lilium martagon* and several mature *Hydrangea anomala petiolaris* (climbing Hydrangeas) surrounded by shady borders and a water feature under mature oaks.

A wisteria-covered pergola provides a cool shady spot to view a kitchen herb and vegetable plot and fine perennial borders in the garden of Ed Hasselkus on Miami Pass. The blue and yellow border was planted with Geraniums, a beautiful blue flowered Clematis (*durandii?*), and punctuated with the tall spires of *Eremerus* and a truly special rare yellow flowered herbaceous peony.

Just up the street from Ed, Chris Bylsma's front entry garden is a lovely tapestry of colors and textures. The back garden is a cool, shady retreat with lovely perennial combinations featuring many specimen Hostas including a tropical looking giant, *Hosta nigrescens* 'Elatior'.

On Tuesday, June 21 we enjoyed the short drive out to Waterloo to visit three more gardens. Howard Kulke has planted a mini arboretum of specimen trees and shrubs about his property, while Bonnie grows a wide variety of annuals and perennials for Onondaga Herbs and Everlastings. A prairie garden, large waterfall and pond, and a kitchen vegetable plot surround their house.

Lee and Chris Fiedorowicz and David and Jeannie Zastrow merged their two adjoining gardens to create a cool green oasis punctuated with plantings of colorful perennials. A waterfall, stream, and pond garden, and dozens of birdhouses nestled under large trees, no doubt providing a sanctuary for visiting wildlife.

On July 9, as part of a garden conservancy tour, we visited Pat and Chuck Bell's garden near St. Charles, IL. Many island beds are planted with sun loving perennials, including a large variety of *Hemerocallis*. Paths lead visitors through a woodland garden planted with specimen Hostas and companion plants under mature Oak trees. A more formal garden is richly planted with combinations of shade loving perennials, sculptures, and a welcome seating area offering relief from the 90° heat.

—John Cannon