

Jerry Brown and Suzan Kudick have been creating their own personal Garden Rhapsodies for the last several years, inspired by other local gardens and artists with dramatic flair all its own. The garden has been designed to create a beautiful outside living room, enclosed by lush and fragrant walls. This is a mature garden, with different “rooms” and tranquil places to sit and observe the landscape from different points-of-view. The garden was designed to fill in, leaving little room for weeds. A thick mulch layer further discourages weeds but those desirable plants that volunteer here and there are welcomed into the space!

What are your watering strategies? Watering depends on the needs of the particular plants in that zone. Some areas of the garden require deep watering twice a week through the summer and some don’t require much additional water, at all. Almost all of the gardens have their own water line attached to either a soaker hose or drip irrigation line. These are great water-saving devices that make it easy to water by “flipping a switch.”

How do you control pests? Slugs are usually taken care of by the snakes and raccoons in the garden. Those that remain are trapped using less-toxic slug bait. Aphids are pretty much taken care of by ladybugs in the garden; a hard stream of water does the trick, or an application of safer soap if really needed. Moles continue to evade the traps so these gardeners are still trying to figure out how to “encourage” them out of the garden.

How do you fertilize? In the spring, the garden is fertilized with a mix of cow manure and compost. Some specific plants such as lilies get an additional application of quick-release fertilizer in the late summer to encourage them to continue blooming into the fall.

What approach do you use for controlling diseases? The main disease prevention strategy is to water in the morning rather than the evening. This strategy gives the plants time to use the water during the day and ensures that leaves are dry by the time evening descends.

How do you handle weeds? Regular hand weeding begins in the spring and continues through the fall. Weed control strategies include: pulling, burning with the weed torch, vinegar applications in warm weather, or when all else fails, ignore them! The lawn is kept tidy and mowed to prevent weeds in the lawn from going to seed.

How many hours a week do you spend in the garden? A LOT! These gardeners are spending so much working in it, playing in it and just enjoying it that it is hard to really estimate how much time is spent working.

Do you attract wildlife to your garden? Yes! Many plants are in the garden especially because they attract butterflies and bees. Bird feeders are scattered through out the yard and there are many seed producing plants and water features that attract birds and pollinators.

What are your biggest gardening challenges? The size of the garden can be overwhelming at times.

What makes gardening fun or satisfying for you? Part of the joy of gardening is watching everything come back different year after year. The garden is always changing, never the same.