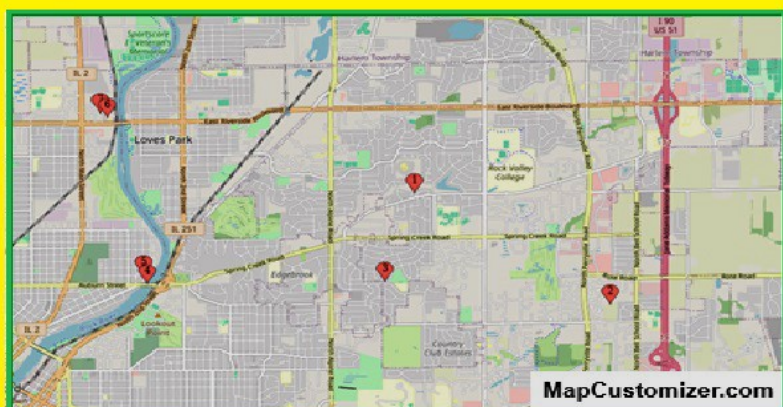


CRG GARDEN WALK 2024



FEATURED GARDENS

- 1) WOMANSPACE - 3333 Maria Linden Dr., Rockford
- 2) Peloquin / Wild - 1615 Oakforest Dr., Rockford
- 3) Eliason - 1884 Plum Orchard Lane, Rockford
- 4) Tumilowicz - 2121 Harlem Blvd, Rockford
- 5) Schmitt - 1912 Clinton St. Rockford
- 6) Hade - 39 Briar Ln, Rockford
- 7) Gunn - 22 Johns Woods Drive, Rockford

COUNCIL OF ROCKFORD GARDENERS WED. JULY 10th 1pm - 8pm

1. The Womanspace Gardens

The Lilly Fernandez Meditation Garden, located in the clearing of a small aging pine forest, was begun in 1997 and has been developed over the years by volunteers who are members and friends of Womanspace.

More than 150 different types of plants, most of them perennials, enhance the seven berms in the garden. Plants were selected for attracting birds and butterflies, for their deer resistant qualities, low maintenance needs, and drought tolerance; as well as for fragrance and beauty. Due to the removal of two large trees central to the garden our formerly shady spaces are adjusting to more sun, so the hostas are welcoming new shrubs and flowers such as lilies, foxgloves, and coreopsis. Many of the ferns, hostas, hydrangeas, and ground covers have expanded into the margins of the garden and the woods beyond.

While at Womanspace, please wander around to see the many small garden spaces. Consider following the ribbon flags out to our eleven circuit stone labyrinth, modeled after the medieval Chartres Cathedral labyrinth. So much to see, so little time, so please plan to return. Gardens, prairie, and labyrinth are open dawn to dusk.

2. The Peloquin Garden

When I moved in seven years ago the property had one bed of shrubs and a border around the house with...more shrubs. As an avid gardener that would never do, so it was time to embark on a multi-year improvement project. We tripled the size of the original bed and added five more. There now is a vegetable garden and a tranquil woodland water feature connected to our pool. Some beds follow themes (moon garden, hot colors bed, clematis) while others are typical cottage garden free-for-alls made up of perennials that took my fancy that particular year.

The specimens I include have mostly evolved to those which the rabbits ignore (yes, there are some!) But I still plant many others and just attempt to chase the critters out by madly chasing/yelling/clapping at them. Hence the "Crazy Rabbit Lady" sign that my son gave me two years ago.

The little water feature feeding into our pool is part of our backyard woodland setting that provides for a tranquil after-work experience. I have threatened to expand the beds to the extent that no grass would remain, but the lawn does make for a nice walkway between them.

Our yard also includes a Little Free Library accompanied by a reading bench, and we enjoy having many visitors.

3. The Eliason Garden

Our gardening journey began with the purchase of our house 28 years ago. The unusual pie-shaped lot with a deep back yard consisted of a small area of grass; the remainder was “natural” with an abundance of ash trees and weeds. A path was added and plants were chosen that would thrive in deep shade. Several years later the emerald ash borer hastened the removal of ash trees and changed the landscape to dappled shade. Shade-loving hostas, ferns, astilbes, and Japanese anemones adjusted to more sunlight. Meanwhile, sun-loving daylilies, cone-flowers, oriental lilies, spring flowering shrubs, and—my favorite new plant, hellebores—have added gorgeous color.

Numerous planters placed throughout the yard are filled with annuals to entice hummingbirds, butterflies, and bees. A variety of birds return every spring to nest in the myriad of houses provided for them. Visitors are encouraged to sit on a bench and enjoy the plants and wildlife.

4. The Tumilowicz Garden

Our midcentury modern home is accented with many hardscape features that make it unique. Our front drive has an oasis of greenery with a Japanese pagoda at its midpoint, and gracing the front stone of the house is a large saucer magnolia tree. The home is situated on the Rock River with a great view of the Symbol sculpture. We also have our own sock monkey Symbol sculpture, surrounded by flowering shrubs.

There are several flowering crabapple trees and weeping and upright Japanese maples of all sizes throughout our lawn. We have installed a pond with a waterfall in the back area. On the south side there is a bottlebrush buckeye tree set in a planting area and the north side features a star magnolia tree.

We find it very peaceful to sit outside on our patio/deck, looking at the landscape and listening to the sounds of the river and our waterfall. We hope you enjoy your visit!

5. The Schmitt Garden

Our gardening adventure began twenty-eight years ago when we inherited basic foundational landscaping and neglected flower beds.

Since then, through numerous projects, we have transformed them into our version of an English country style garden, inspired by our Tudor home. Soil erosion issues prompted the installation of an English ivy slope with a short stone retainment wall. Enclosing the backyard created a private haven and afforded opportunities for climbers and an arbor entrance. We also enlarged the original flagstone patio to accommodate multiple seating areas.

Our plant choices are influenced by an abundance of filtered shade from the mature trees on the neighbors' and our property. These trees include towering pines, maples, oaks, a black walnut and a copper beech. Boxwood hedges neatly frame a variety of roses, hostas, specimen trees, and shrubs. We have also incorporated fourteen varieties of hydrangeas including 'Tuff Stuff', 'Limetta', 'Firelight Tidbit', and 'Strawberry Sundae.' A variety of containers dot the garden with annual color. One glorious bed of almost full sun supports a sea of peonies, goldenrod, echinacea, milkweed, Joe Pye weed, 'Sweet Autumn' clematis, baptisia, and morning glories that attract butterflies and hummingbirds daily.

Throughout the garden you'll find scattered seating areas, perfect for enjoying the view of our unique garden ornaments and statuary collected over the years. A particular favorite is a replica of Sylvia Shaw-Judson's "Little Gardener" bronze statue. Shaw-Judson was a Chicago based sculptor born at the turn of the twentieth century. Crafted in 1935, the original statue was in the Rose Garden at the White House during the Kennedy years and remains on display in the Jacqueline Kennedy Garden at the White House today.

Each year presents new challenges and opportunities to create a welcoming space for our family and friends. We hope you enjoy your stroll through our garden this year.

6. The Hade Garden

Upon entering the garden your eye is drawn up a gentle slope. A limestone wall, covered with sedums, defines this middle of three levels. Bird's nest spruce, blue rug juniper, andorra juniper, false cypress, and a 'Bloodgood' Japanese maple along with a large boulder and two lanterns are surrounded by 'All Gold' hakone grasses. Asiatic lilies, heucheras, 'King Kong' ligularias, and 'P.J.M.' rhododendrons provide color.

Limestone steps reach the upper level. Oak leaf, 'Lemon Daddy', and climbing hydrangeas line the path. An American hazelnut tree lends shade for hollies, azaleas, yews, and more hakone grasses. Filling in along the way are *ageratina* (snakeroot), 'Chocolate Chip' ajuga, prairie trillium, and jack-in-the-pulpit.

The sunny third level supports coneflowers, queen of the prairies, butterfly weeds, and phlox. Coming back down the slope are several oaks, 'Lemon Thread' false cypresses, and blue spruces. Two 'Susan' magnolias backdrop 'Big Daddy', 'Sum and Substance', and 'Blue Angel' hostas, and a variegated red twig dogwood. A pond and Passaro's birds fountain are viewed on this middle level from a limestone patio. Surrounding the pond is another 'Bloodgood' Japanese maple, 'Flaming Mound' spirea, fountain grass, Japanese silver grass and a 'Leonard Messel' magnolia.

Drawing visitors down to the lowest level is a 'Gentsch White' Canadian hemlock, 'Strawberry Sundae' hydrangea, and a dappled willow. A narrow path bordered by another wall with pachysandra and ornamental onion leads to a small patio. Cotoneaster and 'Abiqua Drinking Gourd' hostas surround another small fountain.

Although the garden is on three levels, visitors should find the slopes easily walkable.

7. The Gunn Garden

The front garden welcomes visitors with a boxwood hedge and an eclectic collection of specimen trees including a contorted larch, a tupelo tree, a large mugho pine, a contorted locust, a dwarf white pine, and a 'DeGroot's Spire' arborvitae. Two mixed flower beds include lilies and butterfly weed (*asclepias tuberosa*). A birdbath is surrounded by a planting of marigolds.

A curved path leads to the back garden. Climbing hydrangeas cover the century-old oaks shading this garden, which was started in 1995. Stone columns and iron gates accent the entrance. A twelve-foot dwarf concolor fir is just inside the gate and shades a patch of 'Green Sheen' pachysandra. In many areas throughout the landscape, ground covers are used instead of mulch; beds have been defined with metal edging. Yellow-green foliage brings light into this shady garden, where the Japanese forest grass contrasts with the large leaves of many varieties of hostas and ferns. Two yellow variegated Pagoda dogwoods provide a color echo.

Bloom and color peak in the spring. Five varieties of quince, Exbury hybrid azaleas, *amelanchier*, *fothergilla gardenii*, oakleaf hydrangea, cornelian cherry, *clethra alnifolia*, and tree peonies provide a succession of bloom. Flowering trees such as 'Louisa' weeping crabtree, 'Candied Apple' crabtree, two yellow magnolias, and redbuds add to this. Large plantings of blue Siberian squill, Virginia bluebells, and allium bulbs supplement the spring show.

After the spring blooms fade, many varieties of hostas, ferns, *epimediums*, *arisaemas*, Japanese toad lilies, and Japanese forest grasses take center stage.

The slate patio is surrounded by cherubs representing the four seasons. The two dwarf Japanese maples in large blue pots are overwintered in the garage along with potted boxwood. A fountain echoes the four seasons theme. Many other sculptural pieces can be seen throughout the garden, which is peaceful and inviting throughout the year.