

Friday, August 17

West Suburban Delightful Delicacies

BEARD:

Susan Beard has spent more than four decades nurturing an incredible 3 acre garden that features tens of thousands of daffodils, tulips and other spring-flowering bulbs. Come summer, the winding paths through her woodland are packed with shade-loving ornamental plants and natives while glorious containers are carefully placed near paths and entry points. An experienced designer who once offered garden design services and gave talks at The Morton Arboretum, Beard planned her own garden to afford views with focal points from every room in the house. A gated arbor with an 8-foot opening was installed in the side yard to create an inviting entryway. She added a 19-foot-long bridge several years ago to make the garden's flow more interesting. A low semicircle of stone surrounds the seating area. "I tell people when you have rolling land, cut into it to make a wall, make it dramatic." And dramatic it is.

OBRIEN in Hinsdale:

A designer's garden with great displays of container designs in the front garden leading to a suburban oasis.

MORTON:

Situated on the rolling Valparaiso moraine and bisected by the East Branch of the DuPage River in the Chicago suburb of Lisle, The Morton Arboretum ranks among the leading arboreta of the world.

Established in 1922 by Mr. Joy Morton, founder of the Morton Salt Company and son of J. Sterling Morton (founder of Arbor Day), the Arboretum encompasses 1,700 acres, including 500 acres of plant collections and gardens; and 900 acres of woodlands, prairie, meadows, lakes and streams.

The Morton Arboretum's living collections are one of the most comprehensive collections of woody plants in North America. On the grounds are 220,000 specimens in the collections and 4,500 different types of trees, shrubs and other plants native to 40 countries, which serve as vital resources for scientific study. Plant collections are categorized by horticultural, geographic, scientific, special habitat (modified soils/sites), evaluation groups, and endangered plants.

Since the Arboretum's inception, practical, scientific research has been a cornerstone activity, focusing on how to grow healthier trees and to champion healthy tree communities all over the world so the planet can thrive. The Arboretum's tree breeding program has introduced disease-resistant trees including the Accolade™ elm (*Ulmus davidiana* var. *japonica* 'Morton'), State Street™ Miyabe's maple (*Acer miyabei* 'Morton') and the Exclamation!™ London planetree (*Platanus acerifolia* 'Morton Circle').

The Arboretum's free Plant Clinic helps homeowners, gardeners and landscape professionals throughout the Chicago region and the world grow healthy, attractive, well-chosen plants.

Trained staff and volunteers are available in person, by phone, or by e-mail to help with tree and plant selection, identifying and coping with pests and diseases, and other concerns.

Conservation is a cornerstone of the Arboretum. The Arboretum's world-renowned 100-acre Schulenberg Prairie is one of the oldest reconstructed prairies in the U.S., while the Arboretum is leading and assisting efforts to prevent extinction and secure the world's threatened tree species through its Global Tree Conservation Program.

Aquascape Inc. focuses on an ecosystem approach to decorative water features that relies on the most natural balance of circulation, filtration, plants, fish, and rocks and gravel to ensure sustainability. We have an extensive network of Certified Aquascape Contractors who implement our 20-step, 20-product approach to create unique water features in landscapes around the world. Aquascape is the only water feature manufacturer that field-tests products and processes before going to market.

From 1999 through 2002, Aquascape made the Inc. 500 List of Fastest Growing, Privately-Held Companies in North America. In 2006, our corporate office received a Silver-Level LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) rating from the U.S. Green Building Council. In 2015 and 2016, Aquascape was proud to receive the Healthiest Companies in America award from Interactive Health.

MCVAY - Walk into the west suburban garden of Pat and Rosalie McVay and the word that immediately springs to mind is "contemporary." Yet the garden is also brimming with no end of traditional elements.

"Our goal is to live 'softly on the earth'," says Rosie McVay of the intent behind their beautiful surroundings that include a four-season waterfall and fountain designed and installed by Aquascape Construction.

There's the vegetable garden, a garden pavilion, a garden pool with a waterfall, an espaliered fruit tree fronted by plantings suggestive of a knot garden and, out front, a labyrinth.

The McVays' garden pavilion, perfect for al fresco dining, is topped with solar panels that provide all the electricity for the house. The garden pool, a 10- by 20-foot above-ground concrete box, sits atop a cistern from which water circulates year round, requiring no purchases from the city. Water enters the pool through three copper "faucets" and exits to the cistern through a "waterfall" that is the favorite hangout for a pair of mallards that return every year. At the gravel base where water flows underground, there's a small pool where bees come to drink, appearing as early in the year as April.

When the McVays bought their current house, their goals were not just to create a beautiful garden but a productive one that truly took nothing from the land. The basic design concept for the half-acre lot is two large rectangular gardens visible from the house, a fenced vegetable garden and a series of square beds with a direct view to the pool just behind.

“The whole idea has always been to make a garden that’s practical but also aesthetic,” notes Rosalie. This the McVays have done, and they will move forward, interpreting centuries-old concepts in ways that speak to our own time.

Ball Horticultural Company is an industry-leading breeder, producer and wholesale distributor of flowers and vegetables. A family-owned business since it was founded in 1905, Ball has introduced many innovative, award-winning plants to the world. With a home office in West Chicago, Illinois, Ball has worldwide production, sales and marketing through its many subsidiaries on six continents. Gardeners know and love our popular Wave® Petunia brand and recognize our licensed Burpee® vegetable plant program.

GWA Garden Communicators will enjoy the opportunity to visit The Gardens at Ball, usually reserved only for the wholesale customers of the 113-year-old company. There are more than 10 acres of display gardens including 200 varieties of Calibrachoa in container trials and Coleus trials featuring top introductions from recent years. Thousands of annual, perennial and vegetable varieties will be showcased in beds, containers and baskets along with flowers and vegetables in the All-America Selections evaluation trials.

Several breeding companies from Ball have specialized areas in The Gardens, showcasing flowers and vegetables not available for consumers until 2019 – a great chance to get landscape and flower photography for upcoming articles, books and social posts! Look for areas designed by Darwin Perennials, Ball FloraPlant, Selecta One, Burpee, and PanAmerican Seed. Ball experts will be on-hand to answer questions and share their insight on the industry.

Other showstoppers you can’t miss: Vertical wall with foliage designs, hillside culverts color-coded with garden performance stars, overhead arbors of beautiful flower combos, woodland areas for shade-loving plants, a “history” cottage of Ball memorabilia, and pollinator-friendly native plantings with areas of wetland restoration.

Be our guest for the late-afternoon and enjoy from-the-garden refreshment and a meal inspired by some of All-America Selections best-known winners. Ball Horticultural Company is proud to welcome GWA, and we hope to inspire great garden content for years to come!