

Delta Nu 2017 Festival of Gardens Tour – Sunday, June 18th, 1 to 4 p.m.

A- Dave and Bev Shipley - 504 3rd Ave SE

Dave Shipley, West Marshall's athletic director, started gardening in 2005 when he and wife, Bev, decided to move from their country home into town in State Center. The Shipley's built a new home in State Center's Figgins Addition.

Dave has always enjoyed working outside in the summer, enjoying the different colors that come with it. This love of summertime colors is clearly evident in their home's landscaping. Dave has planted a number of colorful perennials including, not only State Center's signature rose bushes, but also hostas, Goblin blanket flowers, Moonbeam coreopsis, Cheyenne Spirit coneflower, Russian sage, Goldfinger potentilla, Minor Black weigela, mums, and climbing clematis. He also plants annuals in pots and in borders around the house.

Dave has worked two water features into their landscaping. In front of the house and leading up to the front door, a waterfall flows into a small pond stocked with goldfish. A second water feature is located in the backyard to the west side of the garage; this waterfall has a gentle slope, splitting off into two directions and flowing into a pond edged with white stone to one side.

Dave's landscaping project has blossomed into a colorful masterpiece over the last twelve years.

B - Len and Karen Garrison - 208 3rd Street SE

Karen and Len Garrison think "hopeful gardeners" might be interested in seeing what a flower garden in progress looks like. Karen, pastor at State Center's United Methodist Church, likes to dream and plant, while her husband, Len, also a pastor, insures her dream garden survives.

The couple is excited to live in their home next to the Municipal Rose Garden. Eldora Woods built the Garrisons' home in the 1950s. She and her late husband, Dr. Arthur Woods, had donated the land next door to the City of State Center. This piece of land later became the Municipal Rose Garden. The Garrisons believe that, with the privilege of living here, comes responsibility for City pride.

Raising roses has been a learning curve for the Garrisons, who had never raised roses before moving into their cottage-style home with its beautiful "borrowed landscaping" next door. The Garrisons believe no garden adjacent to State Center's Rose Garden would be complete without roses; they added four bushes this year.

Each year, the Garrisons have added at least one major shrub or tree, with the intention of developing the landscape around it. All additions are works in progress with a plantings of weeping redbud trees, hostas, and creeping phlox. Lilies have added splashes of color with little expense. Impatiens have always been a staple in their yard, with drifts of them surrounding the house.

In a few years, more perennials, bulb flowers and ornamental grasses will be established. Karen invites you to come back in five years to see their garden's transformation.

C - Jeff and Lori Kunch - 402 3rd Ave. SW

Lori and Jeff Kunch deal with both sun and shade in the gardens surrounding their Victorian-style home, which sits along the historic Lincoln Highway as it passes through State Center.

With shade in mind, the couple started their hosta garden in 2002. It started out small and has grown over the years. The couple collected rocks from local farmers to create the edging around their flowerbeds. Each spring, Lori plants impatiens along with her hostas. Trees in the hosta gardens are cutleaf sumac; the trees grow quickly but live only 10-12 years. Several of the trees have died over the past 3 years. Since most of the present trees are still young and small, the trees won't provide much shade this year.

The Kunches have also created a butterfly garden, which they started 2 years ago with over 200 milkweed plants and 6 butterfly bushes. The climbing vines in the butterfly garden are morning glories, which reseed themselves each year.

Lori and Jeff have planted a succulent garden where nothing else will grow because of the sun. In the afternoon, the succulent garden is the hottest spot in their yard. It's a good thing they also have a nice shaded garden as a retreat from the heat.

Another older home on the garden tour is the Victorian-era home of Beau and Jennifer Hanson and their family. This stately home, with its brightly painted front porch and gingerbread trim, dates back to the early 1900s when William Riemenschneider built it for his wife, Mary Ann.

Jennifer says she doesn't really have a favorite plant, but just loves to watch everything bloom. She says their garden will always be a work in progress, and they are always learning new things.

Pat and John Starn are a team when it comes to gardening. Pat tends the flowers, and John takes care of the vegetable garden. Pat enjoys all types of blooming flowers, both annuals and perennials. Her garden has violas, peonies, petunias, dianthus, clematis, daisies, black-eyed Susans, flags, iris, lupines (Alaska's State Flower), and lilies, such as Stella De Oro daylilies. Her creeping phlox is especially pretty this year. Their property line to the west has spiraea bushes, which have reached a pretty good size. The garden also has hostas, hens and chickens, and, of course, rose bushes. Pat's favorite flowers are the daisies, lupines and dianthus.

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604 2nd Street NW