

## 2021 Public Garden Tour

Every two years, Johnson County K-State Research and Extension hosts a public garden tour of private gardens of the Extension Master Gardeners (EMGs). In 2020, the Public Garden Tour was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As spring rolled around for the 2021 year, Extension proceeded with plans to hold the Garden Tour.

Five gardens were selected for the public to view on May 21 and 22. The rain decided to make an appearance on both of those days, but did not stop people from showing up to get a sneak peek at the landscapes. Each garden had between 2,500 and 2,700 visitors. In order to keep everyone safe, we asked volunteers and guests to remain socially distanced and highly recommended wearing a facemask if not fully vaccinated.

### Preparing the Gardens

There is a lot of preparation going into the garden tour, everything from planning to planting for the event. Each garden has three to four garden captains who are responsible for working with the owners to bring in teams of volunteers for garden



*Geri and Ron Padley at their home garden 'Serenity at Water's Edge'.*

maintenance. 30 to 40 EMG volunteers prepared the gardens weekly for spring cleaning, planting, pruning, mulching and other tasks making the garden prime for the tour and accessible for attendees.

### Garden Selection

Two years before the Garden Tour, gardens are selected. There are a lot of factors going into the decision-making process. These include overall beauty but also a variety of gardens and gardening styles. The goal is to provide education and excite people about gardening. There is something for everyone!

That is why there are diverse plants including sun, shade, vegetables, etc.

### Volunteer Involvement

There are 450 volunteers in our EMG program, with 275 volunteers helping make this event successful. For something the Garden Tour, it is an all hands on deck event, from writing educational facts about the plants, selling tickets, preparing the gardens and assisting on the day of the tour. At the end of the event, the EMGs sent out a survey to gather feedback from the attendees. The results were extremely positive, especially when it came to the volunteers. 97% of respondents said that the EMGs

**K-STATE**  
Research and Extension

Master Gardener  
Johnson County



**\$229,710.00**

Dollar value of service for 275 volunteers  
with an estimated 9,300 hours volunteered.

were very helpful in answering questions during the tour. 85% of people said that they would recommend the tour to others.

### What does the Garden Tour Support?

The Garden Tour is an educational program promoting Extensions best management practices and gives tangible examples of plants and landscaping recommendations. Helping maintain the high quality of life in Johnson County.

Well landscaped homes have a higher resale value. Funds from the tour help fund yearly college scholarships and maintain the EMG program including demonstration gardens, youth programming and other educational programs and projects in the Johnson County area.



*The Reichel 'Botanical Elegance' Garden is full of fountains, shrubs and flowers.*



*The Faulkner Gardens 'An Artful Garden.'*

### Tour the Gardens!

Five gardens were open for all to see. The 'Artful Garden' is a unique and charming English garden mixing art with plants. The space is filled with colors and textures of all kinds and blends seamlessly with the sculptures and paintings.

In contrast, there was the 'Botanical Elegance' garden. The landscape is classic and elegant, featuring fountains and perfectly placed plantings. This European garden made it difficult to imagine you were still in Kansas.

'Woodland Possibilities' has a lot of mature, shade trees and bright vibrant colors. This garden is a complete oasis of shade loving plants. The ambiance is a place of complete tranquility.

Making our way down to southern Johnson County is the 'Countryside Collection'. Getting outside of the suburbs means there is more space to grow. This yard is a country escape with raised garden beds for veggies and herbs, native plants, and unique plantings.

Finally, 'Serenity at the

Water's Edge' is full of elegant landscaping with an expansive waterfall and a pond to highlight the unique plants.

Going on tour to all of these unique gardens in Johnson County is a real excitement for many residents. This tour helps people find inspiration to style their own gardens at home as well as educate them on the best plants for their environment. We are grateful to all our volunteers, staff and patrons who make the Garden Tour possible.

### Response from Visitors

**"I always look forward to and enjoy the garden tour. The Master Gardeners do a great service for the community in offering this tour."**

**"This was my first garden tour and I was very impressed not only with the organization but with the people who were there to help and to answer questions. Very Impressive for sure."**