



The backyard of Gary Bailey and Gayle Scholl, with a garden sitting just below the terrace, captures a view of Yakima.

# GARDENS AS ART

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If only Claude Monet could have seen it. The French Impressionist would have reveled in the delicious sights — glowing purple African daisies, vibrant orange profusion zinnia, blazing yellow osteosporum, deep red salvia, delicate blue ageratum.

Gary Bailey and Gayle Scholl have created an oasis filled with both tangible works of art and vivid flowers.

Theirs is one of five gardens that will unfold their finery for area residents during the Yakima Area Arboretum's annual Garden Tour on Saturday. Also featured:

- "Hillside Garden — A Challenge Met," by Ann and Mel Stohl, where a wide range of trees and plants convert a steep slope into an elegant locale.

- "Garden With A Vista," by Becky Lang-Boyd and Tom Boyd, is surrounded by fields and orchards, according sweeping views of the Valley and beds of mixed plantings.

- Chawley and Becky Thomas' "Sun-Wood Park: A Woodland Retreat," where hundreds of deciduous and conifer trees and a potpourri of plantings greet the eye.

- "The Artful Garden," by Rob and Michelle Wyles, highlights heirloom roses as well as a garden shed featured in the book "Stylish Sheds and Elegant Hideaways" by Debra Prinzing.

Described as "casual elegance and simplicity equals balance," Bailey and Scholl's one-acre Scenic Drive lot dazzles with a drop-dead southern view of the Valley.

But, first, the entrance. As Colleen Adams-Schuppe, co-executive director of the arboretum, points out, "Even the driveway is beautiful."

Waves of color and soft curves line the drive, with splashes of marigolds, pansies, geranium, roses and peonies — all punctuated by flowering white snow in summer.

Bailey and Scholl have reinvented their yard over the past few years, suffusing it on all sides, corners and crannies with annuals that terrace down to raised beds of vegetables and a vineyard of wine grapes and raspberries.

They're firm believers in using organic methods, enhanced with a healthy amount of compost.

Winding borders of orange marigolds, purple verbena, blue campanula and yellow begonia corroborate their love of bold color and variety.

"We like it where you can wander and find surprises," explains Scholl.

She credits Bailey with most of the heavy lifting — certainly with the decorative rocks — and day-to-day gardening chores.

Both are artists, in fine arts as well as in the garden. She's a printmaker, oil painter and photographer. He's a sculptor and photographer; two of his metal sculptures enhance the yard.

Their garden, then, is an evolving work of art, Bailey explains: "Over time you learn more, you gain perspective."

He pauses. "And you get tired."

He's not kidding about the tired. They realized they were devoting too much time to grappling with the greens.

"We were gardening to near death," Scholl admits. "We were constantly weeding, weeding, weeding."

Both retired, they were spending about 80 hours a week out in the dirt. Now, after the spring plantings, they've pared it down to about 10.

One secret was adding drip irrigation in several areas. It saves water and cuts down on weeds. They also eliminated six flower beds, planted more low-maintenance grapes, minimized the vegetable space and extended the lawn.

"It's been an amazing study," says Bailey, explaining that their goal was to create a calming, soothing ambiance. "As Gayle says, 'If it lies down and behaves itself, then we keep it.'"

"But are we there yet? Not totally."

Visitors who enter Bailey and Scholl's garden, as well as the four others, during Saturday's tour will be dazzled by the beauty, promises Adams-Schuppe.

"These are truly unique gardens," she says. "They're emotional places that hit all your senses, with smells, sounds touch, color and taste."

"What other kind of art has that same effect on people?"

*The arboretum's annual Garden Tour features five gardens that more accurately could be described as expressions of skill and imagination*



Wind sculptures by Lyman Whitaker dance in the breeze at the edge of the yard.