



Blooming Saint Paul Showcase 2023









ENTER HERE







CLEVELAND
GARDEN







"Being in my garden always makes me happy. I try to make a space that's welcoming to bees, butterflies, birds, all pollinators; a beautiful spot for neighbors and passers-by to enjoy. I play with colors, textures, shapes and forms, mixing vegetables, herbs, natives, perennials, annuals and shrubs throughout the yard and am glad to share with others. I plan for a long season of blooms, from the first crocus emerging from the snow and visited by bees on their cleansing flights, to the Virginia bluebells, trillium, and other spring ephemerals, to the peonies, then the riot of summer color, to the late season zinnias—a bright spot for Monarchs to stop during their migration—and dahlias in which bumble bees often snuggle in for the night. Hummingbirds get special attention, finding the plants that they like most and planting them close to back windows so I can watch them zoom around.



"There are special plants throughout the yard—my grandma's favorite flower, the zinnias planted with my dad, peonies from my grandpa's garden, and the rose bush given to me by a friend in memory of my mom. Gardens are places of discovery every day. Watching children observe the bees, find the monarch eggs, the swallowtail caterpillar munching on dill, all the other amazing things happening in the garden is a special joy. I enjoy walking through the alleys to see what's growing and who in my neighborhood has an Alley Garden Award flag. Also walking on the front sidewalks to see what's growing in other yards and who was honored by Blooming St. Paul. Thank you for this great program. I'm honored to be nominated this year!"

2/2

















"A few pictures of my perennials, mostly as they appear now, but a couple of the spring-blooming plants. I let the milkweed run rampant in parts so it's tricky to get pictures."





















"This garden has unfolded from a deep need to connect into the land and my community, while exploring the alchemy of science and art enmeshed in my own humanity. A car accident some years ago changed my abilities and this outdoor space has allowed me space to begin to process those changes, reimagine my strengths, and draw upon the collective capacity within community connection. I appreciate every moment of self-discovery, -compassion, and -expression that it affords me. I am deeply grateful for every encounter with a passerby that it has invited and the awe-inspiring friendships that have emerged from those encounters. Every plant and person with which my garden has opened an intersection is an experiment in interdependence that has become my lifeblood."



NO HUMAN
BENG
IS ILLEGAL















"The gardens in the front of the house began about 7 years ago when we decided to rebuild the retaining wall to include a terraced garden. The main reason I wanted to have the retaining wall re-made with a terrace was two-fold. As a Licensed Childcare Provider, I didn't like the height of the old wall, I was always concerned a child would fall off the edge. Having the front retaining wall terraced was just as much for the safety of the children who I care for, but it also gave me a wonderful garden space to add some extra much needed curb appeal to an average, old St. Paul home.

1/5



“As a Childcare Provider who has families coming into my home everyday, it’s important to me that my home is inviting and comfortable for my clients. Walking up to the front stairs when the gardens are blooming with color is just as fun and adventurous for the little ones as it is for their parents.

My gardening ambitions have changed drastically over the past 20 or so years as I’ve grown to enjoy the beauty of watching the gardens (and the children in them) GROW.

2/5



"I've always tried to add flowers and gardens around the house, however, most were potted annuals and I didn't always do well keeping them alive for very long! I've never considered myself a skilled gardener, creating my garden spaces has been a lot of moving plants, trial & error and do-overs. Several years ago, I got involved with a program in St. Paul that was giving childcare providers the opportunity to grow vegetables with the children, and they gave us a "Garden-in-a-Box". Thus began the love of growing things!

3/5





I've learned to appreciate perennials more than annuals - although I still add a few annuals into the mix for the added splash of color - how can you resist the huge, beautiful "rainbow" begonias that are in full bloom from May until October?

4/5





In our back yard we have a beautiful vegetable garden that all started with one small cloth "box" and has now evolved into a 20 foot long garden space with raised beds, an out of control raspberry bush, strawberries, watermelons, pumpkins, asparagus, cucumber, basil, cilantro, green peppers & tomatoes! The gardens are not only appealing to the eye for many who drive by and see the front, but they're also a fun learning experience for the kids! They love to pick the fruits and veggies and eat them straight out of the garden. We've learned so much about nature and where our delicious foods come from - just by planting some seeds, waiting, watering, watching, patience and a lot of "do-overs".

5/5

















"This nomination was such a delightful surprise! Working in my gardens is definitely my happy place, and if others can get enjoyment out of them too, then all the better! For me, gardening is a way of creating beauty, getting to work with my hands, and using design skills to patiently plan and layer and await the glory of the show. It's a place where I continually learn, experiment, nurture, and remain in awe of what nature delivers.

In the spring, I am literally giddy as the first blooms emerge from the dirt, amazed that they've made their way through again. The sight of tulips of any color makes me smile; creeping phlox provides blankets of bright color we haven't seen all winter. I know that the little rose buds will be a plume of gorgeous red proliferous blooms and a wafting scent that pleases in another month or two. Peonies will become so heavy, they'll need support to stay upright. Both will adorn the inside of my house as cut flowers. I get to put together fresh combinations of flowers for my containers, mixing colors and heights, and making sure they'll survive the heat of summer. It's like art in a pot! My transplanted hydrangeas begin to burst and I can see that they've traveled underground to expand their place in my corner gardens. Some fresh cedar mulch laid down brightens up the ground and lends its intoxicating scent.



"Perhaps I'll use more annuals when my kids are older and I have more time on my hands, but for now, I've mostly planted perennials, to establish a framework of blooms for each season and create some order. And I also love the beautiful chaos of wildflowers. I decided to brighten up the alley side of our lot with a small wildflower garden, which the butterflies and bees love too! The thistle here has come with a vengeance, but even weeding is so rewarding. Pruning, mowing; I love all of it! Managing insect pests, not so much -ha!

Come fall, our whole family enjoys the harvest of our apple tree, snacking on tart apples anytime we're out in the yard. We watch the foliage around us change all sorts of deeper tones. I get to create new flower pots that will carry us toward winter with their beauty and interest. Tired blooms and stems go to compost along with all the fallen leaves from trees, and I do the cleaning up and winterizing necessary for some plants to get through winter. It's all a labor of love, and so worth all it gives back.

Cheers to all of us enjoying what each new season brings!"



















"Thank you for the Blooming St Paul Honoree sign. I have attached a photo of my little prairie on the boulevard, 90% composed of MN Native plants. I expected the bees, butterflies, and moths, but the Gold Finches visiting and singing in my garden were a delightful surprise!"

















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"We're so honored to be nominated for the 2023 Blooming Saint Paul Showcase! Our gardens give us peace and joy and we're so excited that's extending to the neighborhood."



2023

PAGE STREET GARDENS

[Watch the Video](#)















"I moved to the East Side in 2002 to a nice house with almost no landscaping other than lots of white landscaping rock. Slowly over the years, I removed the rock and replaced it with flowers. Eventually I started removing more and more grass and replacing it with flowers. I love the Eastside and truly think it is under-rated and under-represented in the city, and my garden was my attempt to bring more beauty to the East Side.





"As a teacher in Saint Paul on the North End, and a resident on the East Side, I feel like the style of my garden represents what is strongest about our neighborhoods. Incredibly diverse with too many varieties of flowers to list, and a density that provides a feeling of lushness of all the different varieties living together in harmony. Diversity and density. Just like the neighborhood I love.





"The greatest gift of having a garden is having folks to share it with. I hope that I am an example of being able to have a beautiful space without expensive landscaping, not really knowing what I am doing, and having the community to help out. 20 years ago when there was nothing here, I depended on kind donations from local garden groups of surplus plants they had. 20 years later, I am now able to give lots of plants to new folks just starting out. My garden was built, in part, by help from others, and I am now able to pass that along, which makes it all so much more enjoyable."















I'm happy that you guys came to see and acknowledged how beautiful my flowers are. They're my favorite hobby.

[Watch the Video](#)











1617

Blossoms
Saint Paul
2013
Honoree







“It was my maternal grandmother who shared with me her love of flower gardening. “Feel the earth in your hands and smell it,” she would say as we planted the seeds. Careful cultivation yielded striking results; grandmother and grandson as well as the flowers. Her garden was in the back yard surrounded by a white picket fence built by my grandfather. This yard was more private for our family – until an apartment building was built next door!

In the front yard, a lush green lawn flowed from the house to the street. A few shrubs next to the house served to soften the transition. It was typical of the neighborhood; sadly unremarkable. Of note were two trees, an old American elm and a silver-maple. The house was set back from the street behind the elm and the young maple was recovered prior to digging the foundation; only the maple has survived to this day; its falling seedlings cursed annually.



“At one point in my life journey, during a decade-plus stint as a Benedictine monk at Saint John’s Abbey, training included a focus on stewardship of the land and caring for mother earth. This influenced me greatly. Flower gardening was a part of this and my humble contribution to the community. Communing with nature at Saint John’s was a sustaining part of cloistered life perhaps more so than the liturgical



“Amazingly I’ve come full circle from childhood home to owning the family homestead, though it’ll always be “grandpa’s house.” What you see is the culmination of the various influences I’ve gathered along the way.



“And so, along the boulevard, outside the hand-made white picket fence, tall grasses sway in the breeze. Softly buzzing busy bees dance without the need of a choreographer. From flower to flower they fly working earnestly pollinating their hosts; some collecting nectar. The vivid colors and scents attract them to this sign-posted “Bee Sanctuary”!



“Butterflies too take respite in this lush garden oasis. Having begun their life cycle as caterpillars feasting on a favorite meal, they emerge as Monarchs reigning over their miniature kingdom and beyond.

Along this stretch, the hodge-podge of colorful profusion varies slightly from year-to-year. Somewhat planned at its beginning, the passage of time has allowed nature to sculpt its beauty today. Full sun and high temperatures require stamina! And yet they flourish and sprawl along the sidewalk. One year it was featured in Northern Gardener Magazine! Another year the city issued a “correction notice” for “encroachment into the pedestrian right-of-way.” Its author gently asked the indignant owner for slight changes to be made to a most beautiful space. Indeed! The owner complied.



“The owner/gardener tends the weeds, tills the soil and waters between showers while also talking to the plants or is it muttering to himself? The tones are quieter, lest a passer-by hear and begin to wonder. More robust is the conversation directed to pedestrians, human or animal. Usually they stop to admire the view, not necessarily to converse. First the line, “I’m retired; used to be in sales; love to talk!” Blah, blah, blah. The flowers know this already as they’ve heard it countless times.

6/8





“Neighbors and strangers alike seek-out or happen across this little parcel, in every season, “just to see what is happening,” they claim. This is change they can embrace! In spring, crab trees flowering in pink and magenta reign high above the fence; below the bearded iris signal their arrival on stage. Summer delivers an abundance of color for all to see. The grasses with their puffy plumes, asters tall and short and sedum in all its red brilliance announce the onset of autumn. The trees are now brightly dressed in yellow, orange and red leaves. Bee population has peaked and the buzzing din overtakes human conversation; if the latter would but only listen. Winter snow blankets and protects. Only the grasses rise above, still swaying but more often bent and broken. All is quiet, calm and bright, day or night.



“Passing through the gate of the picket fence and under an arbor-like archway one enters a “certified wildlife habitat” designated by the National Wildlife Federation. A Korean boxwood corridor, along the walk, leads to the Cape Cod house and divides the space. Bell urns anchor the corridor and announce the arrival at the house. In the “room” to the right (east), carpet juniper lies before a cedar bench situated amidst ferns, lilies and hosta. Crab apple trees arch overhead. The owner and his cat frequently sit here quietly in the evening. The indoor cat is allowed only to observe the sights, smells and sounds from the lap. It sits still, knowing that swift banishment to the house requires but one false move. And to the left (west), the larger “room” includes a shade garden beneath the canopy of crab apple trees, various shrubs, a tiered birdbath with running water and signpost garden folly. The rooms are busy with wildlife seeking a drink or place to perch or hide. Gold finches visit the birdbath to sip water, crows perch from the folly but never the twain shall meet! Come walk by and stop to admire. Take out the ear buds and listen: to the bees, the birds and the sound of falling water!

Peace to all who pass by!”











BEECH ST
1660 E





"These photos are of our first season following the planting last October.

We have enjoyed this project more than we ever imagined, despite the hours of hard labor. Each week new flowers surprise us with their blooms!"



1663





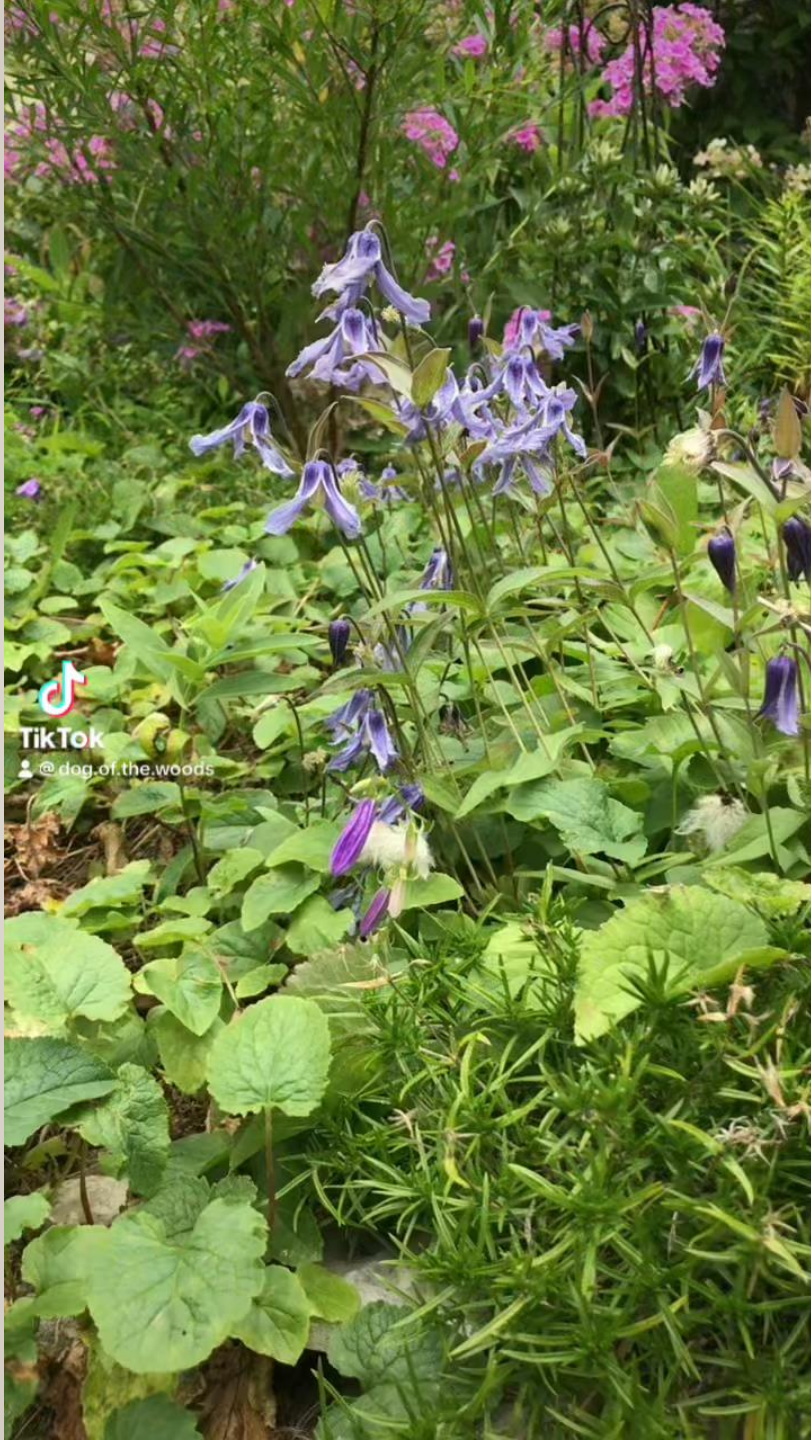






“Our garden is really my mom's garden, Rose's garden. Rose started tending the flowers when our family moved here in 1999, and loved it with all her heart until she passed away from cancer in 2021. I spent summers helping her endlessly weed and wrestle the rose bushes. By midsummer her tan brought into relief the criss-cross of little scars over her forearms that were left from many years of loving and wrangling roses. I always had a little planter tucked into the side of the garden that I got to fill with whatever annuals I wanted. Usually, I chose alyssum and moss roses.

Rose planned the garden thoughtfully. She knew when each plant would bloom and grouped them so that we would have flowers all summer long. Her garden was a place of peace and pride, and I think she knew those plants like her friends. I think she loved them the way you love a person: sometimes because of all their beauty and sometimes in spite of all their frustrations.



TikTok
@dog.of.the.woods

“This summer I started on the project of really getting to know the garden without mom for the first time. My dad had kept the garden going for two summers. My partner and I moved in with him last year, and this year I dove into her garden in the spring. With the help of Rose's sister, Jeanine, we cleared out weeds and I learned how to identify most of the plants that I recognized but didn't know the names of. It's been incredible to watch the blooms come and go over the summer, in waves large and small.

We miss our Rosie every day. Her wild beauty is bursting out through her garden. She is tangled among the rosethorns, and nestled in the prairie smoke. The lily of the valley, coral bells, day lilies, crocus, clematis, phlox, and so many others carry her gentle spirit. We are so grateful to have this vibrant piece of her heart still with us.”

2/2

[Watch the Video](#)















"When I moved into a corner house on the West Side in 1992, I was advised by an across-the-street neighbor that certain expectations came along with being a homeowner on a "corner". Certain things were mentioned... Make sure your yard and sidewalks are kept up nicely each season of the year and keep the street drain and fire hydrant clear of weeds and leaves etc. I think my neighbors thought that a fairly young, single, professional, woman would not have the time or desire to keep up with yard maintenance. I appreciated their concern, but they did not have to worry, I was excited to be a homeowner! I immediately started adding heirloom flowers to existing gardens and creating more garden spaces that I filled with native woodland and prairie plants.

"As I created garden spaces, my plan was to reduce grassy areas and eliminate as much as possible time spent watering grass and mowing. I hated wasting water and mowing grass with my old-fashioned push rotary mower! In the early years, it would take me almost 2 hours to mow, now it takes me @15 minutes. I have added pathways made up of woodchips and pebbles through my garden areas bordered with downed tree branches which - I don't have to mow! I have added many birdfeeders. (Keep those many species of birds and pesky squirrels and rabbits present, happy, and fed!), I planted trees for shade and habitat for plant and animal diversity. (I am a professional naturalist after all!) I felt strongly that I needed to "walk the talk" of my profession at home as well as at work.

2/3



"Over the years, the benefits to me have been many, I got to know my neighbors just by spending so much time outside in my yard. (Of course, it helps to have owned some pretty friendly dogs too!) Gardening is a conversation starter and a friend-maker. It provides great exercise that can guarantee you a good night's sleep. Maybe it's responsible for some sore muscles, but that is okay, gardening builds muscle too! Gardening is a creative outlet - your garden will be uniquely - yours! You can save money and eat healthier by growing, harvesting and preparing your own vegetables and fruits - I do! Gardening benefits my urban neighborhood by adding beauty, color, and fragrance. Gardening creates safety zones in neighborhoods - your neighbors are out and about enjoying other people's gardens and keeping troublemakers off guard. One time 2 police officers pulled their squad car over to me while I was working in my yard, and thanked me for beautifying and creating safe spaces in the neighborhood.

I was humbled by their compliment and touched that they stopped to tell me that my gardens make a difference. I am now retired and still spend a lot of time gardening - I love it, it is an important part of who I am! What I have noticed, over the many years I have lived in my neighborhood is that gardening is infectious! There are many, many beautiful gardens on the West Side now. I am humbled and tickled that "Blooming St. Paul" honored me with recognition of something I so love doing. Thank you!"







1738

PREMISES
UNDER VIDEO
SURVEILLANCE









“Landscaped front yard with rain garden, backyard rain garden and green roof garage. Design was inspired by water management goals to retain surface runoff and mitigate water erosion on a hilly lot. Water from the roof of the house is directed to rain gardens in the front of the lot and in the back yard. The green roof on the garage (designed to carry the extra load) retains water and any excess is directed into the front yard rain garden. Additionally, should the backyard rain garden overflow, the sideyard was graded to create a swale that directs any overflow to the rain garden in the front yard. The imperious driveway in the front has a grated drain mid-way to capture water above it to flow into the rain garden.



“The yard is mostly planted with native perennials to attract pollinators. We hope the yard becomes self sustaining with little watering. The green roof is planted with a variety of sedum with a center circle of numerous native prairie flowers. Once established, the green roof should not need watering as the plants are drought resistant and well suited for growing in a swallow medium used for green roof applications.”













"I have been building my garden here for the last 20 years. I have a native pollinator garden on my boulevard, have won two Blooming Saint Paul awards in the past for my vegetable garden, but this year I decided to go big with dahlias. I have about 150 dahlia plants with 80 different varieties. I entered them in the Minnesota Dahlia Society show at the State Fair and won approximately 33 ribbons, 12 of them blue and one Court of Honor best in show award this year. I garden completely organically and don't even use any organic pesticides so as not to harm the pollinators."







NATIVE WILDLIFE GARDEN
This garden supports valuable insects & birds. It consists of plants that are indigenous to the Upper Midwest prior to European settlement.

We protect the Mississippi River
Mississippi River
We protect the Mississippi River
Mississippi River











"When we bought the house in 2002, the front was already all garden, although somewhat neglected. Over the years I have added early spring bulbs like tulips, daffodils and hyacinths. It is truly the first sign of spring when the shoots begin to appear, often through the remaining snow.



"Since our wedding flower is an iris, the garden overflows with purple iris before the summer annuals come to light. I try to provide color all year long, but recognize that gardens are living and breathing things that change over time and depending on the weather.

2/3





"It's really a way for me to get my hands dirty, relieve some stress and try to make the street more colorful. It is wonderfully rewarding when walkers say how much they appreciate the garden - and this recognition adds a layer to the joy."

























"What a nice surprise to hear that someone from the community has noticed our garden.

We enjoy being a part of the Como Park Community with many unique homes and beautiful gardens.

Minnesota winters are tough; our boulevard took a beating.

Yes, I may have a little OCD, or just a bit crazy that I would attempt this project with our record high temperatures this spring.

We are happy to add additional beauty to our Como Community.

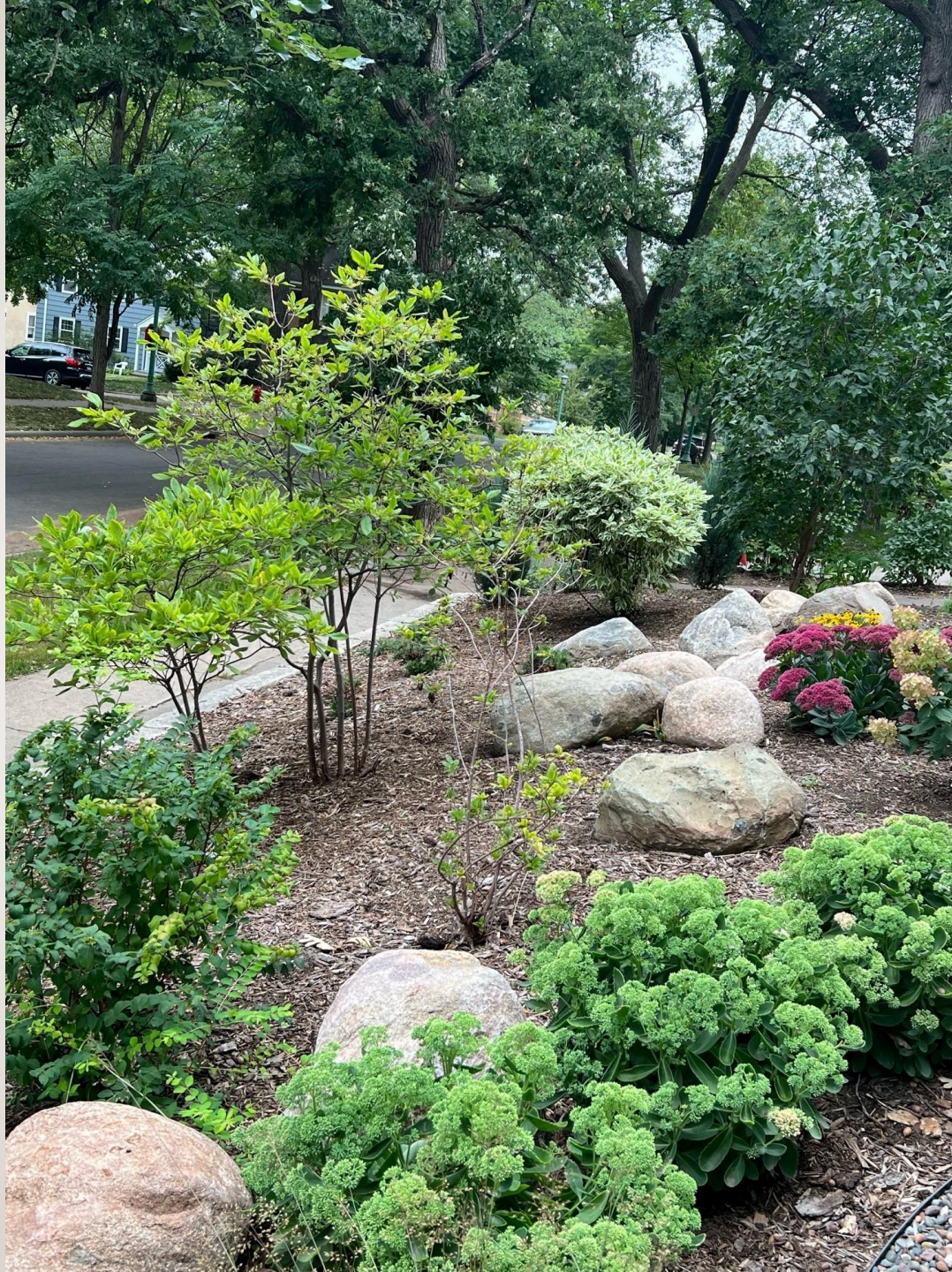
We do not take for granted how lucky we are to live here and we are blessed.

Thank you for thinking of us."

















"In 2014 I was in a near fatal accident that left me disabled and severe ptsd. I had been doing dog and parrot rescue independently for about 15 yrs, I had a houseful of critters, after the accident I had to leave my apt and stay with a friend, which meant I had to send most of my rescues out to various foster homes. Broke my heart.

Fast forward to March 2017 I bought my house with my settlement, and got my babies back, promising them a permanent loving safe home.



"My yard was a hot mess to say the least, so project rehab underwent. And what a project it has been. 99% of my yard is recycled stuff, found on street corners, garage sales, trading with neighbors etc. Even some plants that folks didn't want came here. I've had folks drop off different things with a note asking if they could add to my yard. My top priority was making it safe for the dogs I rescued.

I would go weeks without talking, seeing or leaving my home. My mental health depended on recovery and peace.

Fast forward to 2023, I'm still putting with changes to my yard. My mental health has greatly improved without the aid of medication, I will always be disabled but I've learned to deal with the pain without medication.



"I've successfully rescued, rehabbed and rehomed 350 dogs and 500 parrots. The skeleton dog by the antique fire hydrant resembles all the dogs that couldn't be saved."

3/3

















GRIGGS ST 400

