



Jody's Garden



Park Hill Garden Walk

June 24, 9am-3pm
www.ParkHillGardenWalk.org

Tickets: Ace Hardware, Cake Crumbs, Park Hill Library, online



Lollie & Jamie's Gardens

Left: A gate connects Lollie and Jamie's back yards to facilitate their shared gardening.

Below middle: In the front where pumpkins and spaghetti squash are grown, Lollie has discovered how to protect them from squirrels. She pulls women's tights around them, drawing curious stares from passers by but saving her produce.



By Carol Roberts

Jody Hodges, who worked as an animal keeper at the zoo with the orangutans and gorillas for 27 years, has been a do-it-yourself gardener at her home on Magnolia St. for 27 years. Her front and back yards, which were all grass when she moved in (above), today are an exuberant mix that reflects her independent spirit.

Though she now says her advice to a beginner would probably be to hire someone and make a plan, she couldn't afford that when she started—so she read books, took classes at the Botanic Gardens, and just tried different plants. She says the rule is to plant in groups of three—but when she shops, her inclination is still to try one each of what likes.

Jody's husband of

seven years, Andy Nelson, chimes in with a story that illustrates her independent streak. "We dated for 14 years and the first thing Jody said the day I met her was, 'I don't want anyone telling me what to do, I don't want anyone moving in with me, and I don't want to get married.' Fourteen years later she said, 'Don't you think it's about time we got married?'"

Though Jody has done most of the gardening herself, Andy gets credit for building the pergola (top middle photo) and the garage/workshop where Jody makes jewelry (above right).



The trick for getting rid of grass without hurting your back. Jody lost 10 pounds the summer she dug out and hauled away a section of grass. Then she learned she could cover the grass in the fall with three or four sheets of newspaper held down with bricks. In the spring she had the dead grass and newspaper rotted

and she had soil with compost ready to plant.

Don't make this mistake. To fill in a bare area, Jody planted bishop's weed. The variegated leaves are attractive, but it invades and squeezes out the plants around it. She killed it all off at one point—but it all came back.

Save water with xeriscape plants. Jody's front yard (above right) only needs watering about once every two weeks in the summer. Her

plants include wooly thyme, irises, penstemon and columbine. On the street she has a couple of big plants that provide privacy and never need watering—apache plume and fern bush.

Prevent dog paths among your plants. Jody posted on Next Door looking for stepping stones and created a dog run along the fence (above right) with free material from a family in Stapleton.

"It works," says Jody. The dog runs there and doesn't wear paths among her plants. Anabelle hydrangea that will have big white flowers late summer and fall are planted along the path.

A Favorite Plant. Love in a mist is fern-like with foliage that looks like asparagus and the flowers have a mix of colors.



Ideas from Jody's Garden

Plant steppables. Jody's flagstone (left) is interspersed with wooly thyme, Turkish Veronica (purple flowers), Johnny jump-ups, and snow in summer is at the far edge.

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The annual Park Hill Garden Walk on June 24 offers visitors a look at 10 unique gardens with a multitude of ideas including "urban farms" with chickens, bee hives and veggies, yard art, outdoor kitchens and water features. Repurposing, xeriscape and shared gardening among neighbors are among the features we found in the gardens illustrated here.

Next door neighbors Lollie Roduner and Jamie Forsberg share the work on their adjoining gardens. Lollie has a more traditionally manicured back yard. Jamie says he rearranges and replants much of his back yard each year.

With an eye for repurposing, Lollie found doors at the salvage yard (far left) that she used to create a



privacy screen in her back yard. The plant on the far door sits in a light fixture. Her grown daughter's childhood wagon at right is a planter; and the drawers of an old red tool box will have flowers in the summer. It also doubles as a tabletop for afternoon drinks in the back yard.

The mulch on Lollie's sloping front yard (left) doesn't wash away because she uses gorilla mulch that forms a layer that holds together. The mulch shown at right, however, is rubber so water along the house doesn't soak in; it drains toward the back yard.

Jamie has recently planted "steppable" wooly thyme (above right) in the brick walkway at the front of his house.



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