

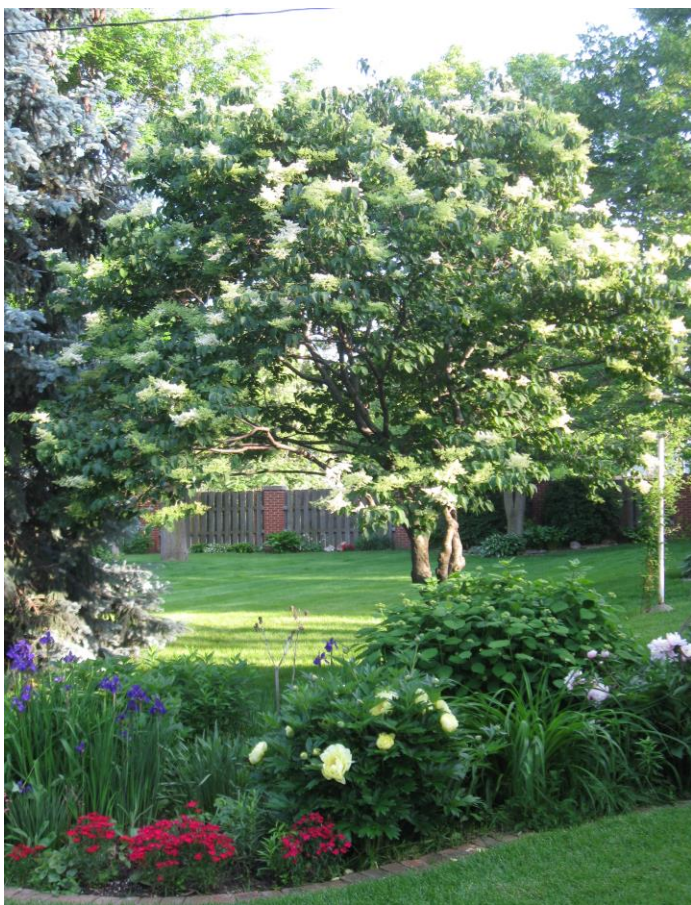
Chances are you've heard the saying, "*Good fences make good neighbors.*" Although such a saying may not be true in all cases, I'm inclined to agree that fences can help to make good neighbors. However, I also believe that good plantings can make for good neighbors. Allow me to explain.

I'm convinced that most passionate gardeners have a difficult time controlling what they plant. Although some favor flowers, others may favor shrubs or trees. Most passionate gardeners desire to grow as many different species of flowers, shrubs and trees in their landscapes as possible.

I am a passionate gardener and trees are one of my favorites. Unfortunately, our yard is too small to accommodate every possible species of tree. We currently have sixteen different species growing in our yard, even after losing two this past winter. I'd love to plant more, but common sense tells me we have enough. There is no more room.

Some trees are planted for the potential shade they will provide. Others are planted for their ornamental value including colorful foliage or colorful flowers. There are also those trees planted strictly for the fruit they will produce. I plant trees for all these reasons.

Rita and I are fortunate that our next-door neighbors to the south of our property have helped us with our tree selection. Adjacent to the property line, they have planted a tree that we truly enjoy, especially at this time of the year. While in our backyard or sitting on our deck, we can revel in its beauty — at the same time knowing it is not taking up space in our backyard



The tree is commonly called a Japanese tree lilac with the botanical name of *Syringa reticulata*. This particular tree is grown for its floral beauty. *Syringa reticulata* is a true lilac; however, this ornamental species is quite different from a common lilac shrub. Rather than being a multi-stemmed bush, this lilac is a small, single-stemmed tree capable of reaching a mature height of twenty-five feet with a fifteen foot spread. This tree lends itself perfectly to a small urban landscape. Free of most insect and disease

problems, it performs well throughout Zones 3 through 6.

Huge panicles of creamy white flowers are borne throughout the canopy during late spring, and the bloom period lasts two to three weeks. These delicate, lacy-like blossoms are highly fragrant —similar to that of a privet flower rather than that of a typical lilac blossom. Presently, our neighbors' lilac tree is gracing us with its outstanding beauty and delightful aroma.



Last year, I suggested to the Minden Tree Board that we plant this species of tree alongside the newly developed block of 5th Street leading from Highway 10 to downtown Minden.

Presently twelve *Syringa reticulata* 'Snow Cap' line 5th Street on both sides. Although still somewhat



small, and not blooming, they already grace the landscape with their charm. I get the feeling when driving down that street they are saying welcome. I anxiously await the day when they, too, are in full bloom, and passersby can delight in their awesome beauty and fragrance.

Although I agree that good fences make good neighbors, I also believe that great plantings make good neighbors. Our neighbors are wonderful people, and I'm grateful they share the beauty of their trees with Rita and me. Hopefully, our landscape plantings return the favor and make us good neighbors for them.

If you desire to be a good neighbor, I urge you to grow *Syringa reticulata* in your landscape. Not only will you delight in its beauty, but so will your neighbors.