

**Yard and Garden – 06-29-2013 - Ted Griess / Extension Horticulture Assistant**

One of Rita's and my favorite things to do each morning is to walk around our yard and check on the progress of everything we've planted. Another favorite thing of ours is having the opportunity to stroll through other people's yards— of course with their permission. Sometimes these strolls are made possible through organized garden walks. Garden walks give visitors, whether gardeners or not, a chance to find inspiration and beauty. For gardeners, these treks can also bestow a bounty of ideas as well as an opportunity to talk shop with fellow enthusiasts.

The members of the Elm Creek Garden Club visited our yard last week. Although little was in bloom at the time of their visit, it was a beautiful evening. A cool breeze drifted across our yard, and it carried the soft, sweet scent of our neighbors' beautifully blooming linden tree. The walk continued for well over an hour, and during that time, Rita and I were able to converse with individual members and discuss the attributes and faults of the many different flowers, trees and shrubs growing in our yard. Two particular plants, *Aruncus dioicus* commonly called goat's beard and *Brunnera macrophylla* cultivar 'Jack Frost', generated significant interest.

While visiting with the club's president, Kathy Kaufman, I discovered the Elm



Jim and Jan Gunderson's Yard

Creek Garden Club has been active for more than fifty years. Originally, the club was affiliated with a state garden club; however, today they exist only as a local

garden club comprised of approximately twenty members. In the early years, the club promoted flower shows featuring such activities as floral arrangement and flower judging. Over the years the club has actively participated in a number of community landscape projects. Kathy indicated to me that more recently the group is comprised of gardening enthusiasts of all ages who enjoy visiting gardens and other horticultural attractions. Their visits usually culminate at a local restaurant for an evening of dining and conversation. Anyone in the Elm Creek area with a passion for gardening is encouraged to join.

From my conversations, I also discovered the Elm Creek Garden Club will once again be helping with The Elm Creek United Methodist Women's Tenth Annual Garden Walk, scheduled for Sunday evening, June 30, 2013, from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Knowing how much Rita and I enjoy touring other people's yards, I thought you might like to know the details of this garden walk.

Registration begins at the Elm Creek United Methodist Church located two blocks north of the U.S. Post Office from 4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Upon registering (for a small fee of \$5.00) attendees will receive a map of the yards featured and an assortment of finger foods to enjoy. Yards featured this year will be those of Jim and Jan Gunderson, James and Gloria Simonson, Mel and Susan Sandoval and Art and Kristie Marshall, all of Elm Creek. Join them for an evening of fun, flowers and fellowship.

Perhaps you will discover, as I hope the visitors to our yard discovered, garden walks can be fun. They also can bring gardening enthusiasts together to learn and gain ideas and, at the same time, find inspiration and beauty.