

Making life beautiful

By Brad Lindberg
Staff Writer

GROSSE POINTE PARK — Terry Riddle and his wife, Dawn, are best buds in the garden.

“It’s a partnership,” Terry Riddle said. “She’s a Master Gardener.”

“I couldn’t do it without his muscles and his support,” Dawn Riddle said. “I come up with some of the designs, but he helps me implement them.”

Teamwork earned them a 2024 Residential Beautification Award from the city’s volunteer beautification committee.

The couple were among 37 recipients of awards presented during a ceremony Nov. 14, at the Tompkins Community Center, Windmill Pointe Park.

“This evening, we come together to recognize and celebrate the imagination, artistic skill and landscape designs of the residents of Grosse Pointe Park,” said Lisa Kyle, recently elected to a second term as chair of the commission.

Dawn Riddle described being shocked at being selected a winner and almost as startled by the commission’s selection process. Members go around the city photographing properties warranting consideration.

“Whoever came to our house was standing in my driveway taking pictures of my house,” she said. “I thought, ‘What are they doing?’ I went outside and said, ‘Can I help you?’ It was a little scary, but he explained



PHOTO BY BRAD LINDBERG

Recipients of the 2024 Grosse Pointe Park Beautification Commission awards attend a ceremony Nov. 14 at the Tompkins Community Center.

he was from the beautification commission.”

“Tonight is all about celebration,” Mayor Michele Hodges told attendees seated at banquet tables. “You’re the cream of the crop.”

It was only the first of her puns.

“Thistle be a night to remember,” Hodges said. “It’s thyme to party and turnip the volume. We’re going to put the petal to the metal. We’re going to knock your stalks off and you’re going to look rad-ishing doing it.”

Commissioners Pat Deck, Kelly Konieczki and City Forester Brian Colter presented awards in five categories: residential, century (for houses among the 343 in the city that are 100 years old this year), sustain-

ability, business and civic.

Announcing residential winners, Deck said, “These are given to residents who have enhanced the appearance of our community through landscaping, floral displays, renovation and restoration, preservation and maintenance and new additions which, in turn, enhance the total appearance of the greater community.”

As recipients walked to the podium to accept their awards, Hodges called from the wings, “You grow girl.” “Did it take a lot of trowel and error?” “Not a trick peony.” “Oh, my gourd. You’re so amazing.”

Antonio Scerri won an award for his restaurant, Antonio’s in the Park, on

Kercheval.

“It was a surprise,” he said. “I really appreciate it. It’s hard work.”

Paul VanTol received a civic award for donating 100 sycamore trees to the city. He grew the trees on property he owns in Macomb County.

“Paul actually dug them up and balled them in burlap himself,” Colter said. “He knew what he was doing. The Grosse Pointe Park Foundation paid for the labor to transplant the trees. The result was fantastic.”

“I’m passionate about trees,” VanTol said. “I have about 200 to 250 more trees. I can’t make them grow faster than they’re growing, so I’m not sure how many are going to be available, but I’m hoping for 50 to 60 again next spring. We can continue that until all 350 trees are donated.”

Winners and judges’ comments are:

Residential

◆ Gregg Munsterman, 1006 Nottingham. “This charming home is neatly lined with curved beds planted in a contrast of color and texture.”

◆ Katrina Wojtan and Andrew Davis, 1264/66 Maryland. “A live wreath and stone pots planted with canna lily and cascading lime green plants

highlight this lovely front façade.”

◆ John and Victoria Lange, 803 Beaconsfield. “A Chicago-style bungalow, this home (has) a stand of common milkweed along the fence (that) will surely support monarch caterpillars and butterflies.”

◆ 1444/46 Beaconsfield. “Perennials fill the beds, including butterfly bush and rudbeckia, to support our local pollinators.”

◆ Ana Southers, 1129 Wayburn. “Pyramid-shaped perennials and variegated hostas add texture, and a neat row of red and white impatiens add a note of formality.”

◆ Ava and Michael Schoenith, 567 Middlesex. “(A) massive ginkgo climbing tree directs your eye to a stunning newly landscaped berm, complete with a soothing water feature and attractive stone accents.”

◆ Vincent Galewski, 806 Barrington. “Maple and tricolor beech trees beautifully adorn this home, as well as cheerful perennials and annuals which certainly greet each passerby with a smile.”

◆ William Schipper III, 560 Barrington. “The front yard showcases a mini-forest of river birch amongst beds of grasses and perennials, such as lavender and coral bells.”

◆ Chris and Diane Huchingson, 904 Lakepointe. “The homeowner is often seen working outside in the garden, showing great care and attention to detail for this delightful property.”

◆ Terry and Dawn Riddle, 750 Westchester. “A beautiful large potted fern greets you to the front door, mirrored by a whimsical weeping cherry on the opposite side.”

◆ The Evans family, 727 Harcourt. “Displays of tall ornamental grass fill the front bed creating a simple yet striking landscape across the front of the house.”

◆ The Yee family, 737 Bedford. “Slight sections of lawn are lined with neat rows of boxwood surrounding the raised porch, ending in a small ornamental tree and shrubs to one side.”

◆ Michael and Fiona Parker, 660 Bedford Lane. “Curved beds surround the front façade of this house, softening the straight lines of the property.”

◆ William Snyder, 630 Bedford Lane. “A distinctive brick pathway winding through lush perennial beds gives a cottage-like feel to this one-story home.”

◆ Mark and Sandy Corrion, 771 Bedford. “USA is the theme for this stately Tudor home. United States flags adorn the lower beds and upper windows, complementing the large flag and USA-colored wreath on the front door. The sailboat in the front window adds the finishing touch.”

◆ David and Theresa Klaasen, 818 Park Lane. “Boxwood and yews are punctuated by hostas and sprays of red and white blooms. The perennial bed includes a variety of flowers in a rainbow of colors with a backdrop of white daisies and hydrangea. Beautiful.”

◆ Peter and Betsy Mogk, 1006 Yorkshire. “Plantings, both controlling and interesting, coexist in a wonderfully blended display that punctuates the front and leaves abundant space for light to shine on the flowers and grasses.”

◆ Jay and Hollie Ritchie, 1174 Kensington. “As the eye is drawn along undulating beds, natural-colored stone holds a variety of shrubs and perennials, with variegated leaves making a star appearance.”

◆ Stephen and Lisa McQueen, 1012 Three Mile Drive. “Neatly clipped foundation plantings are softened by flowering shrubs and accent trees, while a sweep of fresh annuals greet both resident and visitor alike.”

◆ Robert and Jeanine Morris, 1025 Devonshire. “Where to begin with this home, which gives so much? A start would be the wonderful flower bed by the sidewalk. A riot of color and shape, this introduction to the property appeals to visitors and pollinators.”

◆ Laura L. and Stephen Benard, 1145 Berkshire.

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