

I'm No Gardener

By Marilyn Reeves

When I first moved into my little house in southeast Aurora, I decided to put a garden in the backyard. I had sectioned off a sort of fan-shaped triangle in the corner – one side abutting the east fence, one against the south fence, and the front arc separated from the lawn by a brick border.

I ordered some pretty peonies – one red, one pink and one white – and some spreading juniper for groundcover. In addition, I ordered some tulip and daffodil bulbs to plant alongside my front driveway and a hibiscus bush to be placed out next to the front stoop.

When my stuff finally arrived – in the form of bulbs, sticks, and unwieldy looking roots – I got out my trusty spade and trowel and spent most of the day digging in the dirt. I placed the pink peony near the front of the garden next to the east fence and the white one on the opposite side by the south fence. The red one I placed in the very back corner where the two fences conjoined. In between I planted the little baby juniper bushes, thinking they would eventually spread and fill in the bare spots.

Then I went out to the front yard and planted my tulip and daffodil bulbs bordering the driveway and the hibiscus root between the front stoop and the little sapling that might one day grow into an apple tree. Tired but satisfied, I hung up my spade and trowel for the day.

The next morning I headed out to the garden shop to pick up some pots of already-blooming begonias to place along the front row of the back garden – providing the only color I could enjoy right away. The rest I'd have to wait to see, if and when they came up.

Two days later it hailed – one of those mega hail storms that beats the shingles off houses and puts dents into unhappy cars. So much for my brand new begonias! Well, maybe next year.

I lived in that little house in Aurora from July 1, 1979 to July 1, 2004 – exactly 25 years to the day, before pulling up roots (so to speak) and moving to Windsor Gardens.

By the time I moved out, I had long since given up on planting annuals in my back garden. My pretty pink peony still bloomed next to the east fence, the white one next to the south fence, and if I looked really hard, I could see the very top of the red one, still hanging on, peeking up in the far back corner behind those juniper bushes that had not only spread all over the garden but grew taller than the flowers!

But the tulips and daffodils bloomed every spring alongside my drive way. And that hibiscus I put out front? It managed to thrive as well. Every year I was blessed with a single flower on top of the one lone branch that looked like a tall, forlorn stick, standing between the front stoop and the full-grown apple tree.

So much for my experiment in gardening.