THE LITTLE NEIGHBORHOOD THAT COULD

PREVIEWING THE ST. ANNE'S HILL GARDEN AND ART TOUR

By Katie Maurer

For Chris Snider, working in his yard has always been a hobby and a creative outlet.

That's why it's no surprise that the St. Anne's Hill resident will be showcasing his creative yard at the biennial St. Anne's Hill Garden and Art Tour on Saturday, June 26.

"It gives me motivation to do things," Snider said. "It's fun to see the expressions and the reactions of people and gives a new perspective on downtown living."

The St. Anne's Garden and Art Tour has been held every other year for the last six years and is one of the main fundraisers for the neighborhood association, St. Anne's Hill Historic Society.

Mary Jo Dupree organized the event of 16 houses because she likes being involved in the neighborhood.

"It's stressful but fun," she said. "With the garden tour it gives us the opportunity to look for different ways to showcase the neighborhood."

This year's garden tour will feature a variety of homes with many different aspects and creatiye gardens. Snider, who resides at 436 E. Fourth St., has a front and back yard garden full of lush day lilies and other plants that can be seen gracing yards this time of year. Jack and Betty Milliff, at 630 McClain St., the corner of McClain and High Streets, have a pond. Their house, which was originally a grocery store, still has the original storefront window, while their garden that will be on display contains a plethora of flowers including hibiscus, day lilies, petunias and black-eyed Susans.

Jack Milliff has lived in the home since 1998, which he bought from his brother, and has been regularly included on the garden tour.

"Being on the corner, you kind of have to be on it," said Betty Milliff.

Other houses on the tour have ponds while some have front and side gardens as opposed to just front and back, said Dupree.

"There are many different things you wouldn't expect to see at these houses," she said. "(Each) is different and unique and it can give other people an idea of what you can do with a small yard."

St. Anne's has also partnered with some of the local art galleries such as Missing Peace Art Space and the High Street Gallery to attract artists in showcasing their work in gardens or other areas. Both galleries will be open and the High Street Gallery will have a special show just for the tour, "Art in Bloom."

"This tour is important to our neighborhood," said Keith Klein, past president of the neighborhood association. "It highlights neat homes and gardens and gives people the opportunity to learn more about the neighborhood and the importance of historic districts."

The self-guided tour will run from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and will begin at the High Street Gallery, 48 High Street. Visitors can pick up a program and then stroll through the gardens and galleries at their leisure.

Parking is available at the Bomberger Center at 1306 E. Fifth Street, or at the Stivers School for the Arts at 1313 E. Fifth Street.

Tickets are $10 just for the tour or $15 for the tour and a visit to the Victorian Tea Garden on the front lawn of the landmark Bossler Mansion at 136 S. Dutoit Street, which overlooks downtown Dayton. The mansion was built in 1869 and is considered Dayton's best example of Second Empire architecture.

Interested parties can order tickets online at www.StAnnesHill.org.

"The tour is a great example of how neighborhoods come together and work toward a goal," Klein said. "I love how people come together and work together and help with their project. That's what our neighborhood is all about."

St. Anne's Hill is located one mile east of Downtown Dayton, just beyond the Oregon District. It is bounded by Route 35 on the south, Keowee Street to the west, Fourth Street on the north and McClure Street to the east.

right: Milliff garden

below: Snider garden

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