

Another Day – Another Garden

Recently I assisted Mary L., another Master Gardener, with an idea she had been considering for a few months. She wanted to expand a flower bed.

As some of you know Rita Randolph had a half off plant sell in June with lots of great plants on sale. Mary and I went to take advantage of it and got some real bargains. Mary mentioned she wanted a water feature in her back yard but wanted the sound of running water to accompany the feature. The two of us found plants that complimented each other, purchased them, and kept them alive until we were ready to tackle the job.

Mary called one morning asking if I would help by offering my ideas and opinions. The area was sprayed with grass and weed killer. Then we drove T-posts into the ground around the perimeter so she could keep the dogs out of the sprayed area with some sort of barrier to use as fencing.

As Clint Eastwood's character, Gunny Highway, in Heartbreak Ridge said, "You adapt. You overcome. You improvise." (Of course he was referring to a certain branch of our military here.) And Mary had already come up with an idea.

She suggested using the bird netting over her raised berry beds. (She wasn't planning on using the blueberries anyway. So she decided to allow the birds to have their fill). We proceeded to wrap the bird netting around the T-posts in the sprayed area.

A week later... I arrive at Mary's at 7:00am. She had coffee and a bowl of cereal waiting for me. We filled our water mugs with iced water and got to work. First Mary dragged out the tub (the future water feature), placed it in the general area where she wanted it, and filled it with some newspapers and a little water. Next the wet newspaper was layered, and then we threw on a little mulch to hold the paper down as it dried out while we finished the rest of the area. With the hose, we wet the whole area, added peat moss, then grass clippings, top soil, and finally dressed it with a thick layer of mulch.

The unsightly black tub was ready to be leveled and filled with water. It stood out like a sore thumb. Now Mary has these pavers she bought in a pallet load at the 2009 Tipton County Master Gardener's "Gear Up Your Landscape" garden expo. Again I heard *Gunny Highway's* growl inside my head. The words "*you improvise*" were the loudest. Yes I hear voices..... ;)

I went to work on what would become a Wishing Well water feature. You will notice in the photo, those are three different size pavers dry stacked around the tub. Planted in the openings are stone crop and at the base are what I've always call rose moss.

We took a well deserve break (with a stop at Starbucks for a frozen coffee treat) and picked up 16 pavers across the highway. The pavers were to create a walkway through the bed. Back at the garden we laid and leveled the pavers and planted a few flowers.

All this was accomplished (including the break) between 7:00am and 4:30pm with frequent stops to cool off, rest, and rehydrate. Maybe that's why it took 9 hours and I'm so sore.

I have my eye on a couple of solar water fountain pumps for the sound effects desired in the Wishing Well.

Here's a tidbit about my gardening style... I grew up in the country. We made do with what was on hand. I'm a little bit redneck. Most assuredly I'm proudly the daughter of a WWII Marine.