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Landscape Project Advanced Master Gardeners Thanksgiving Point 2006

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**LANDSCAPE PROJECT
ADVANCED MASTER GARDENERS
THANKSGIVING POINT 2006**

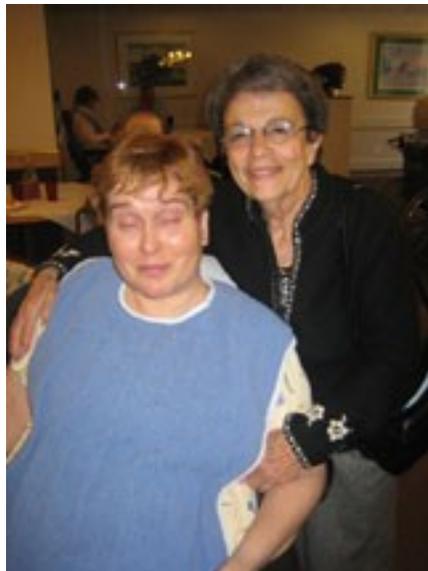
AMG Team: Kelly Seamons Sue Campbell Carol Williams

PROJECT:

EAST LAKE CARE CENTER, 1001 North 500 West, Provo, Utah 371-9157 and 377-9661



East Lake Care Center is a live-in facility providing full-time care for adults with debilitating and/or terminal diagnoses. It was chosen because of a friend, Natalie Rutishauser, with multiple sclerosis, who has been a resident there for several years. It was chosen from a desire to improve conditions.



There are many resident rooms which look onto the inner courtyard. This courtyard is rather colorless and bleak, In considering how to proceed, Kansas State University guidelines for the handicapped were accessed.

GOAL -- to enhance the already outlined and partly landscaped inner courtyard, hoping to create an environment which would invite residents and guests to enjoy gardening in the space, enrich their experience, and entice them to linger and visit; to offer something beautiful and refreshing to look at, with seasonal plant changes and an active gardening experience for those residents who are interested and capable.

Step One -- Meet With the Manager

Our first meeting with the facility manager, Traci Schneider resulted in a walk-through of the courtyard. We were introduced to Kelly, the physical facilities manager. These are the two people who have control and say over what is done on the grounds.

The courtyard is already hardscaped with:

- 1) concrete pathways intersecting the lawn areas
- 2) wooden pergola with concrete floor
- 3) brick and concrete circular planter bed with a fountain in the center, set into a concrete circle, which serves to create a pathway around the circular bed.
- 4) covered patio area along the east wall.

We discussed these problems:

- 1) bunnies allowed to run loose, leaving droppings on walkways which cause a walking hazard as well as a health issue.
- 2) uneven concrete sections, dangerous for walking and wheelchairs.
- 3) drainage grates set at bottom of a grade in the center of each lawn section, restricting safe access to use of the lawns for gatherings
- 4) lighting fixtures in pergola not outdoor rated; have broken glass panels, replaced by plastic

- 5) overgrown, woody shrubs that bloom poorly and need to be divided
- 6) overall lack of color and interest
- 7) fountain out of order
- 8) brick and concrete planter around fountain is in disrepair
- 9) lack of seating around courtyard to invite residents and guests

We proposed to try the following:

- A. Adding raised planting beds along the concrete walkway, giving gardening access to those in wheelchairs -- trying for donations on castle brick, possibly seconds.
- B. Large boulders added to the drainage areas in lawn for effect
- C. Repairing circular concrete planter and adding soil (donation) and plants
- D. Restoring fountain to working order by trying for donation of a new pump, etc.
- E. Trying to get donations of new outdoor lighting, up to code.
- F. Trying to get donations of evergreens, shrubs, plants and flowers
- G. Pruning overgrown trees to allow more sunlight.
- H. Repairing concrete bench, finding more chairs

What Really Happened:

As we began right away to work, we discovered that irrigation, or lack of it, would be our biggest problem. We hoped to get help from an irrigation company, but none were forthcoming. We looked for help with lighting fixtures, but none were donated. We checked several stone and rock places for seconds on bricks, but there were no discounts, let alone donations. We learned after several unsuccessful tries that we needed to look to ourselves for all of our materials. If it was going to happen, it was going to be done by us.

These are some of the things we were able to get done:

- 1) The fountain was refurbished with great assistance from Greg Fowler, by Sue Campbell, who did find a donated pump.
- 2) The three of us were able to remove and divide the woody shrubs.
- 3) Soil was added to the repaired planter as well as several plants.
- 4) The facility added lattice panels to the pergola.
- 5) Birdhouses were painted and hung by Kelly Seamons.
- 6) Bird feeders were made and hung by Carol Williams.

ANALYSIS -- WHAT WE LEARNED ALONG THE WAY

1. We learned that the project will be as good as we are at making it good. There is no one assigned to maintain the courtyard specifically, and the overburdened and oft-changing staff will not be of help.

2. We learned that though we were promised that the rabbits would be caged, once caged, a resident let them out to run free. Further, the facility promised to put them into an enclosed "run" area on the south side of the courtyard, but some residents objected, so this was never done. Clearly, though as gardeners we saw the rabbits as a nuisance who continued to eat everything we planted, some residents did not. We learned that the rabbits were around for good, and to stop fighting the issue.

3. We learned that maintenance of the fountain was a difficult issue. No one person at the facility was assigned to put the water in as needed, resulting in burn-out of the pump.

4. We learned that most of the people who now use the courtyard do so in order to smoke. There are cigarette butts everywhere. Everywhere. It is often hard to work there due to the second hand smoke, so we choose to do the hard labor early in the day.

5. We learned how difficult the space is to work in due to extremely limited access. For

patient safety, the inner courtyard is only accessible through one doorway, which is off of the main inner hallway. Persons wishing to enter the garden must come through the front door and pass the reception desk. This is also the only way to bring in or take out anything. It is very hard to bring in large, heavy objects, and to remove trash. We are obliged to use the facilities own trash containers on wheels and slowly push them down two carpeted hallways to the outside, and then lift them up to tip into the commercial trash containers.

We are likewise obliged to cart in all of our equipment, soil, plants, tools, etc. Cumbersome, not to have a direct access to the outside, to cars and trucks. The water faucets have their handles removed to prevent unexpected resident use - - - we have to bring water to the area in our watering cans, which water we obtain from the ladies restroom. Hmmmmm.

We also learned that this is an on-going project.

- a) We have revised our plans and expectations due to what we have learned this year,
- b) We will still try to build the raised flower beds, with stained concrete blocks.
- c) We now have an area in mind to plan for, gathering materials throughout the fall and winter,
- d) We will plant our own seeds, divided plants, bulbs, etc. from our own gardens.
- e) We learned that most business are now requiring as much as a year advance notice of a written request for donation that can be sent to corporate headquarters.
- f) We will choose plants from such sources as the High Country Gardens list of Rabbit Resistant Plants.
- g) We also learned that what little we were able to do to improve the area, may have encouraged the facility staff to do some things as well. Nice.

We learned.

















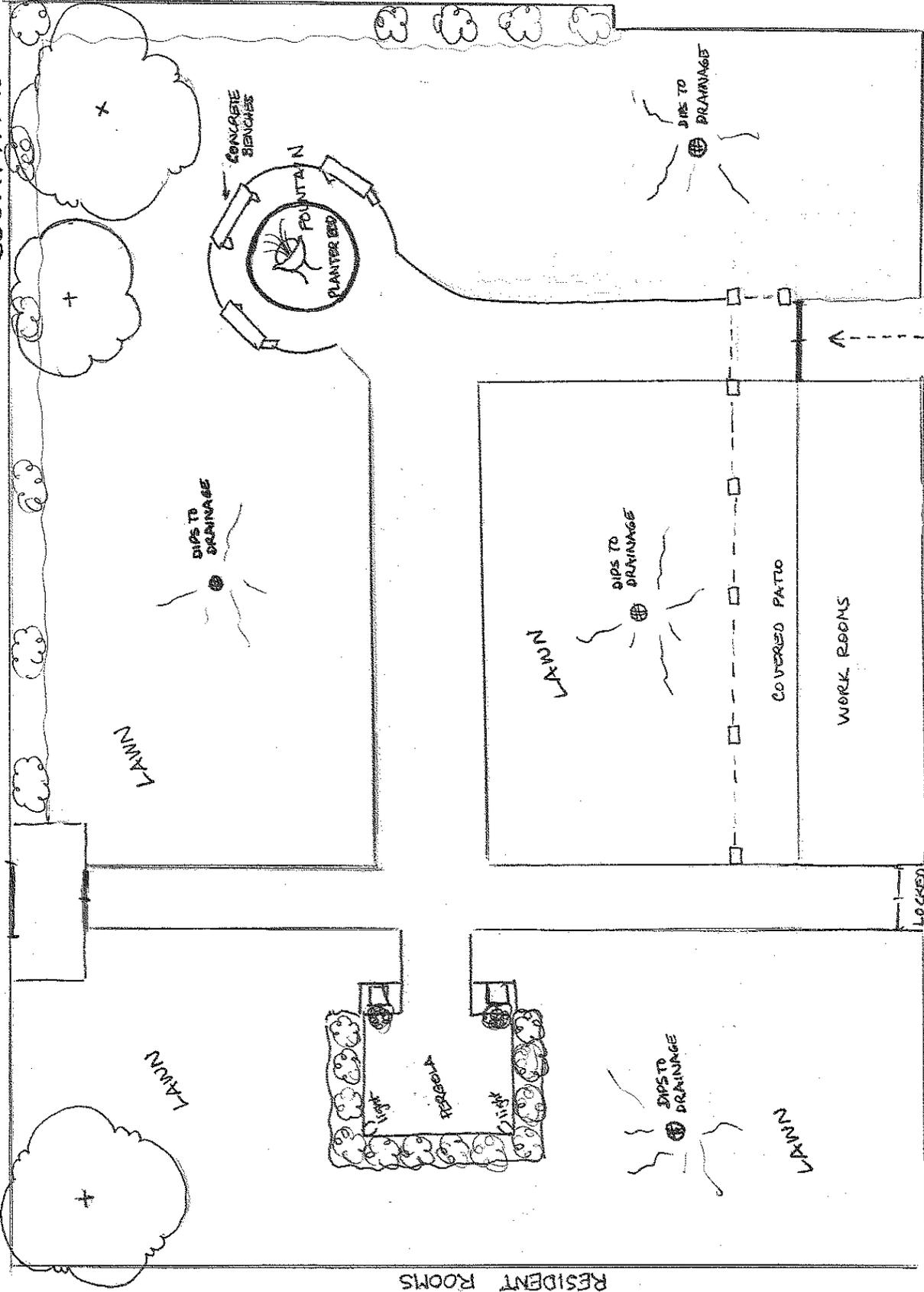


EAST LAKE CARE CENTER - COURTYARD

RESIDENT ROOMS

RESIDENT ROOMS

RESIDENT ROOMS



ONLY ACCESS

TO RECEPTION

LOCKED DOOR

Rabbit Resistant Plants

Achillea (Yarrow)
Agave (Century Plant)
Agastache (Hyssop or Hummingbird Mint)
Agastache cana (Texas Hummingbird Mint)
Aquilegia (Columbine)
Artemisia (Powis Castle or Silver Sage)
Cacti
Caryopteris (Blue Mist Spirea) .
Calyophus hartwegii (Sun drops)
Chrysothamnus (Chamisa)
Cytisus purgens (Spanish Broom)
Digitalis (Foxglove)
Eriogonum umbellatum (Buckwheat)
Erodium (Stork's Bill)
Falugia (Apache Plume)
Gaillardia (Blanket Flower)
Geraniums (Hardy Perennial Geraniums)
Lavandula (lavender)
Mahonia fendleri (Mahonia)
Narcissus (Daffodils)
Nepeta (Catmint)
Origanum (Oregano)
Oxytropis (Locoweed)
Penstemons
Peony
Perovskia (Russian Sage)
Rosmarinus (Rosemary)
Salvia (Sage)
Santolina
Scorophularia macrantha (Redbirds in a Tree)
Sedum (Stone Crop)
Silene laciniata (Mexican Catchfly)
Stachys coccinea (Hedgenettle)
Stanleya pinnata (Prince's Plume)
Tagetes (Perennial Marigold)
Tanacetum vulgare, "Crispum" (Tansy)
Thymus (Thyme)
Kniphofia uvaria (Red-Hot Poker)
Yucca
Zinnia grandiflora
Zizophora clinopodioides (Blue Mint Bush)

"Keeping Rabbits Away From the Garden," Cindy Bellinger, August 2004. High Country Gardens.