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Where Landscaping is an Art

MAY 2014

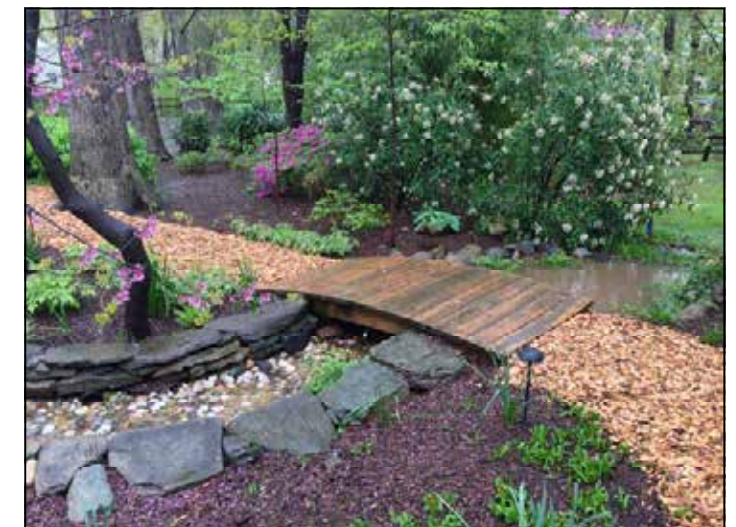
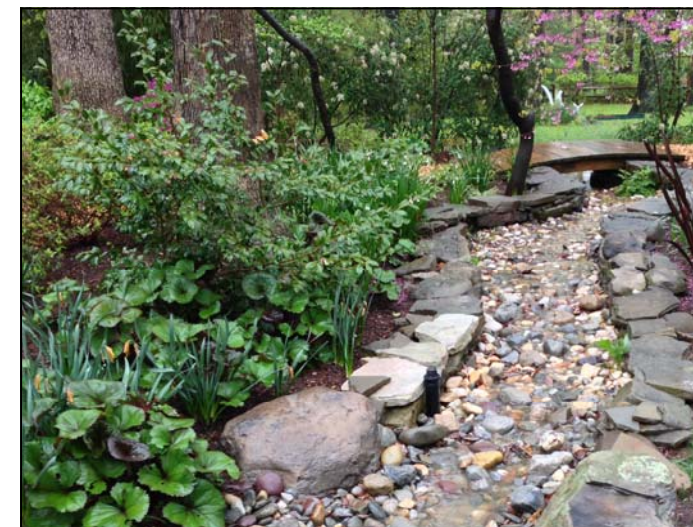
Rain Gardens

The purpose of a rain garden is to **improve water quality** by collecting runoff so it can be filtered and slowly absorbed by the soil. A woodland or meadow naturally captures the majority of rainfall in the foliage and root zone where it slowly percolates back down to the water table and reappears as springs and streams. But in an urban environment most of the water quickly runs off roofs, driveways and sidewalks and goes into storm drains which discharge directly into streams. This large volume of fast moving water creates flooding and erosion of stream banks.

We can all become better stewards of the land by installing rain gardens on our property. They mimic what nature does by slowing down water flow, collecting sediment/fertilizer and reducing the volume of water leaving your property and entering storm drains.



A pit is dug in the ground to capture runoff. It is lined with filter fabric, gravel, and sand to make more porous space for water to collect. Stones are placed around the edge to prevent erosion, and water loving plants are added for the finishing touch.



When you install a rain garden you are contributing to the health of the entire watershed between your house and the Chesapeake Bay. After a heavy rain, it's easy to see just how much water can be collected and allowed to percolate back into the soil.

Earth Day Celebration

Volunteers gathered at the Walker Nature Center in Reston and planted over 200 shrubs and perennials to commemorate Earth Day on April 22nd. Director of Nature House, Katie Shaw organized the event which coincided with Reston's 50 year anniversary.

The steady April showers did not dampen the spirits of the Reston Garden Club and the many other volunteers who came to help beautify the demonstration gardens around the nature center.



Above, the Hidden Lane team of Richard Kropp-Sullivan, Production Manager Conor O'Neill, and Reynaldo Funes dig into the pile of compost and distribute it in beds all around the grounds.



Pictured at right are Katie Shaw, Charles and Julie Bond from the Reston Garden Club and Peter Murray, President of Hidden Lane.



Design Details

Project Location: Ashburn

Designer: Tony Orband

Client Request: Replace the narrow walkway and create a welcoming front entry with a European flair. We want a place where we can relax and watch children at play without feeling too exposed to the street.



Solution: Delicate trees, limestone capped pillars and a low yew hedge were the formal markers used to frame this entry patio and give it a sense of enclosure. The walkway is constructed of black basalt set on a diagonal with marble center pieces and a three course granite cobblestone border. A shroud of Chinese Fringe trees surround the space with airy branching and their architecture and craggy trunks add to the feeling of privacy. A limestone step from the lawn sets off the patio while on the left side a border of knockout roses provides a colorful screen for mid level privacy. Add in Geranium, Coleus, and Plumbago, and this area is transformed into an elegant courtyard. This became a favorite place for the family and neighbors to hang out and keep an eye on the children playing out front. Years later when the house was sold, the new owners said the patio was THE selling point for this home.



Hillwood Museum

Are you missing your Downton Abbey fix? Hillwood Estate & Museum, 4155 Linnean Ave, Wash DC, will give you a glimpse of that lifestyle via Marjorie Merriwether Post's home & gardens. Ms. Post was DC's grand dame of arts and entertainment during the 1960's and 70's. Her beautiful home features French decorative arts, the largest collection of Russian Imperial Art outside of Russia, including Faberge Eggs and a beautiful stone inlay dining room table.



Marjorie Merriwether Post

Ever the philanthropist, Ms. Post hosted numerous receptions and fundraisers on the Lunar Lawn for the Salvation Army, American Red Cross, and National Symphony Orchestra. She also invited wounded war veterans from Bethesda Naval Hospital and Walter Reed for tea on the lawn along with live entertainment, an early precursor to the Wounded Warrior program. From the lunar lawn you can see the Washington Monument, only 3.8 miles away, even though you feel you are in the Virginia countryside.



An overview of Hillwood Museum & Gardens.

The exquisite gardens feature a French Parterre (visible from her bedroom), a lovely rose garden, Japanese Garden with multiple waterfalls & pools, a Russian Dacha, the Adirondack Building, which recalls the style of her Adirondack Camp in New York, and the glorious greenhouse and cutting gardens that furnished Hillwood and her other homes (Mar-a-Lago) with fresh cut flowers.



The Lunar Lawn



The French Parterre Garden

Experience the elegance and grace of Ms. Post's beloved Hillwood Estate on your own, or participate on one of the many lectures/concerts/programs sponsored by Hillwood Museum. Look for them at www.HillwoodMuseum.org.