

The O'Neill Garden

Art in the Garden

Gerry and Karla O'Neill —
Olathe

About the gardener

The O'Neills have lived in their home since July of 1986. That's 38 years of gardening! The home was newly built when they moved in. They had a total of five trees in the yard, two of which died shortly after being planted. Now two strong oak trees in the back provide restful shade for guests on the patio to enjoy.

Over time, adding garden spaces and new plants allowed this charming garden to grow into the welcoming haven you see today.

Gerry was inspired by art as he created his garden. Gerry explains that his garden's 'canvas' is always changing. If a plant isn't doing as well as expected, he discovered that often moving the plant to a new location can remedy the situation.

The O'Neills' garden began out of a wish of Karla's to have a rose garden. That was 25 years ago, and not a single rose can be found in this garden today thanks to the large oak trees. However, a love for gardening was planted those many years ago and continues to this day.

The various magnolias throughout the landscape are a special favorite of Gerry's. The variety of sizes and shapes and beautiful blooms make for a great addition to the garden. A special favorite is 'Yellow Bird' with its large, bright, canary yellow flowers that emerge late in spring and put on quite a show.

Gerry's tips

- ✓ The landscape 'canvas' is always changing. If a plant isn't thriving, a new location may help.
- ✓ Water, water, water! Be it any of the 4 seasons (including winter), proper watering will create the best results for your plantings.
- ✓ Always prepare the garden beds before you start planting. Work in compost and a little fertilizer to give your plants a great start!
- ✓ Mulched leaves in the fall provide a useful and free soil amendment.



Special things to notice about this garden

- Notice the **artwork on easels** painted by the garden owner, featuring the treasured plants nearby.
- Notice the **rose of Sharon espalier** adding a special focal point in the garden.
- See the **garden beds sweeping** on both sides of the picket fence, allowing passers-by the enjoyment of viewing the carefully tended plants.
- See the **potting bench** and **cascading pots** filled with edibles, both useful and attractive additions to the garden.

Gerry's favorite plants

- **Magnolia.** Large, glossy handsome leaves and attractive flowers make this tree a favorite of Gerry's. They grow well in this area.
- **Peonies.** Abundant, delicate, and often fragrant flowers make this a valued plant in the perennial garden.
- **Hydrangea.** Easy to maintain hardy shrubs that are showstoppers when in bloom. A great ornamental shrub for our area.
- **Viburnum.** With their often-fragrant spring blooms, colorful fall foliage and berries, they provide year round interest in the garden.
- **Japanese Maple.** The delicate purple-red leaves in the summer and vibrant fall color make this small tree a favorite choice.