

Out in the Garden

by Kathie Sawyer

Six years ago it began as a simple attempt to locate a garden in an area where it would not need to be moved mid-season. Our newly purchased home had quickly revealed a secret ... we did not have a legal septic system. It appeared that we would soon be digging somewhere in the back yard to make a legal system. My partner brought out the tiller and began to change a "golf course" perfect front lawn into a garden. Soon a large, somewhat rectangular bare patch of ground began to appear.

We did notice that the passing traffic slowed a bit as we worked, and a few folks nearly hit the utility pole at the corner, but somehow we didn't have a full sense of how outrageous our efforts would appear. Our house is located in the center of a small village, a short distance from the general store. The clerk told us later in the day that everyone who came in asked, "What are they doing?"

Many of us live unobtrusively within our communities. Circumstances dictated that we be very visible to the town as we pursued our love of gardening. Even our quarrels as we two women resolve the placement of shrubs and perennials are there for the world to see or hear as we lose ourselves out in the garden.

Now, six years and many new bare patches later, we maintain the garden in the front yard. This year it is beginning to achieve the established garden look that we have worked towards. In addition, we have established ourselves in the village. It's interesting that in order to obviously look at the gardens, folks usually assume a friendly smiling face and often wave. Some even stop, and we share information and even plants and seedlings. "Please take some gloriosa daisies!"

This year I was fortunate to be involved in an exchange of plants with a fellow gardener. He has raised some incredibly healthy delphiniums. I have placed a metal tomato cage about each new plant, hoping that this will give them sufficient support to stay erect against the wind. Previously I have used bamboo stakes and ties, with mixed success.

This spring has astounded us. Our joy in the early warming of the soil which has given us quick germination and growth is offset by hovering questions about global warming. I must admit that I really would enjoy one growing season in a zone 6 climate. Visions of all those too tender plants dance in my head. My forsythia never blooms except for a few haggard yellow flowers at the bottom. My neighbor explains that the forsythia is a zone 3 shrub with a zone 5 flower. I'm learning about shrubs. This year the weigela bloomed for the first time and I am rejoicing. I learn as I grow. We would love to have an exchange of ideas about gardening. Any readers wanting to share ideas, perspectives, or to report on gardening failure or success, please write to us care of OITM, PO Box 177, Burlington, VT 05402.

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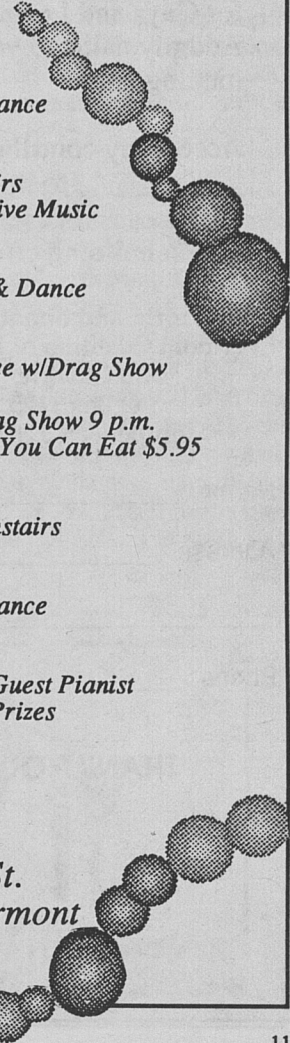
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The Passion of Pearls...

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- July 20 Ladies Lounge Dance
\$1.00 7-10
p.m.
- July 21 Piano Bar Upstairs
July 28 P.J. & Cousins Live Music
\$5.00 9-1
p.m.
- August 2 Women's Buffet & Dance
\$5.00 5-9
p.m.
- August 11 Men's Tea Dancee w/ Drag Show
\$3.00 Tea
Dance 6 p.m. Drag Show 9 p.m.
- August 14 Pasta Night - All You Can Eat \$5.95
Cole Porter
Night 6-10 p.m.
- August 15 Juice Bar - Downstairs
\$3.00 18+
& older
- August 17 Ladies Lounge Dance
\$1.00 7-10
p.m.
- August 18 Piano Bar with Guest Pianist
August 25 Bingo, Pizza, & Prizes
8 p.m.

Pearls

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