



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
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2007 Minneapolis Garden Awardees Announced at Blooms Day 2008

(May 13, 2008) The top 2007 Minneapolis Garden Awards were presented at Blooms Day 2008 at Logan Park Recreation Center in Minneapolis on Saturday, April 26, 2008. Blooms Day is the annual awards and educational fair held by Metro Blooms, formerly known as Minneapolis Blooms.

The *Nate Siegel Award*, named in tribute to the founder of Metro Blooms, was awarded to Frank Fitzgerald (3241 Colfax Ave S, Minneapolis, 55408). Frank's exceptional garden, his dedication to gardening education, and his enthusiastic encouragement of others to garden are the reasons he received the organization's top honor.

The *Neighborhood Investment Award* recipient is Stephen Kung (2818 11th Ave S, Minneapolis 55407). On the edge of an arsenic zone, Stephen transformed his yard contaminated with hospital waste into a beautiful botanic garden – while at the same time bringing in aspects that encouraged neighborhood participation: a playhouse, a compost pile and a chicken coop with five feathered friends.

The *Best Residential Garden Award* recipients are Greg Freitag and Shari Pomeroy (909 Kenwood Parkway, Minneapolis 55403). Hard work and Shari's designer eye, along with some professional help, have developed their property to a beautiful oasis, including the transformation of an enormous hill overlooking Lake of the Isles Parkway.

The *Best Business Garden Award* recipient is Seward Co-op Grocery and Deli Garden (2111 East Franklin Avenue, Minneapolis 55404). Leo Sanders, Operations Manager at the Seward Co-op, was instrumental in starting the garden, and Russ Henry of Giving Tree Gardens took off with it. As the co-op prepares for a move and expansion down a few blocks on Franklin Avenue, a four-year garden plan is already in the works, including visions of rain gardens and fruit trees.

The *Best Church Garden Award* recipient is the Church of St. Philip (2507 Bryant Ave N, Minneapolis 55411). In a tough part of Minneapolis, a young priest, Father Greg Tolaas, started the garden in the spring of

1998 after coming to the parish. From the beginning, the garden has been a community effort, and remains open to everyone any day of the year.

The *Best Boulevard Garden Award* recipient is Michael Buechner (3547 15th Ave S, Minneapolis 55407). Michael's boulevard garden is a study in functionality and beauty. Its paver edge allows pedestrians a spot to step on when getting in and out of a car. The boulevard slopes so stormwater can infiltrate. He chose plants that are not only drought tolerant, but will thrive in drought conditions – Little Blue Stem, Sedum, Russian Sage, Artemesia, etc.

The *Best Window Box Garden Award* recipient is Curran's Restaurant (4201 Nicollet Ave S, Minneapolis 55409). Owners Dennis and Lori Curran pick and choose the plants by hand and plant the boxes themselves. Though it happened somewhat by accident at first, they now have a knack for great color choices that keep the blooms going all season long.

The *All Garden – No Turf Award* recipients are Wendell Vandersluis and Cynthia Marsh (2588 Upton Ave S, Minneapolis 55405). Their garden is beautifully tucked away near Cedar Lake. The fact that their garden drains directly into a waterway is part of why they've chosen the no-turf route. "I'm personally not a big supporter of lawns," says Wendell, and he goes on to expand on his concerns about lawn chemicals leeching into the lakes.

The *Most Colorful Garden Award* recipient is Stuart Hamby (3525 38th Ave S, Minneapolis 55406). Stuart's arrangement of annuals and perennials makes this garden splash with color and shout exuberance all summer long.

The *Outstanding Conifer Garden Award* recipients are Claude and Laurel Riedel (5133 Bryant Ave S, Minneapolis 55419). Claude and Laurel talk about their garden in the way that most people would discuss a piece of fine art. That indeed is what it is. For nineteen years they have lived in their house and worked on the yard piece-by-piece to transform it from scorched grass into the beautiful botanical textures and rock outcroppings that encircle their home today.

For more information on a specific award winner or pictures of any of these award-winning gardens, please contact Noelle Hechtman at 651-699-2426 or nhechtman@comcast.net.

Metro Blooms is a nonprofit educational and membership organization dedicated to ecologically friendly gardening education and the celebration of the achievements of gardeners in the metropolitan Twin Cities. Its mission is to

promote and celebrate gardening to beautify our community and to heal and protect our environment. For more information about Metro Blooms, visit www.metroblooms.org.

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