

August 2020 Client Corner: The Joy of Gardening

As we approach our fifth month of spending the majority of our time at home, most of us have tackled a “quarantine project” or two. Perhaps a DIY you have been planning that you finally got around to or tackling an organizational project. Jan Kabat, a Kemp Financial Client for over six years, had started her project long before the pandemic, but she has now been enjoying it more than ever before.

When you think of the ideal garden some words that may come to mind are...lush, tranquil, breezy, shady, colorful, blooming, etc. Well Jan’s beautiful garden is all that and more. Jan has had a love of gardening since she was a little girl thanks to her mom who also loved spending time in her garden. Once Jan retired, she was able to devote the time she had always wanted to her garden. She took classes and received her certification as an Orange County Master Gardener in 2010. Following that Jan worked for seven years as a volunteer Master Gardener in the University of California ANR Research & Extension Center's sustainable landscapes where she and others taught the public about water quality and sustainable landscaping. For the past three years (up until the shutdown) she has been working at a Senior Garden teaching seniors how to grow vegetables. Both experiences have been very rewarding for her.



Jan’s garden at home is what she describes as “eclectic.” She loves many different types of plants ranging from cottage garden plants, like roses and hydrangeas, to drought tolerant to food crops. She gravitates towards plants that are unusual and special. She has at least 50 varieties of plants, and is still planting! Three citrus trees and a half-century old Jacaranda that carpets her yard in purple every spring are some of her favorites. Her very favorite plant however has to be her "Lady Banks" climbing rose that grows over an arbor at the entrance of one part of the garden. It is big and rambunctious and beautiful and was planted in memory of her husband, who could have been characterized the same way. It

blooms once a year in the spring and is definitely the centerpiece of her spring garden.



Another spot she loves is her kitchen garden. One of her friends built two beautiful 4-foot high raised garden beds this spring, which is a perfect height for easy gardening and Jan is experimenting with crops of tomatoes, shishito peppers, eggplant, pole beans, Persian cucumbers, lettuce, carrots and a beautiful Italian squash called Trombetta that is a delicacy in her family. The tomatoes are all heirloom tomatoes that have grown from seeds, which is a new adventure this year with kitchen gardening. In addition to the raised beds she also has pots of herbs, blueberries, strawberries, a patch for beans and a patch of "Jack-o-Lantern" pumpkins for her granddaughter. She loves to come over to "Grammy's" and take part in the bounty of green beans, tomatoes and strawberries, which she enjoys right off of the vine.

Jan's garden is such a gift to her, especially during this pandemic. It has provided her with a place of peace and beauty where she can get out and enjoy the fresh air and feed her soul. She is deeply grateful for it every single day, and can't think of a better place to be quarantined.