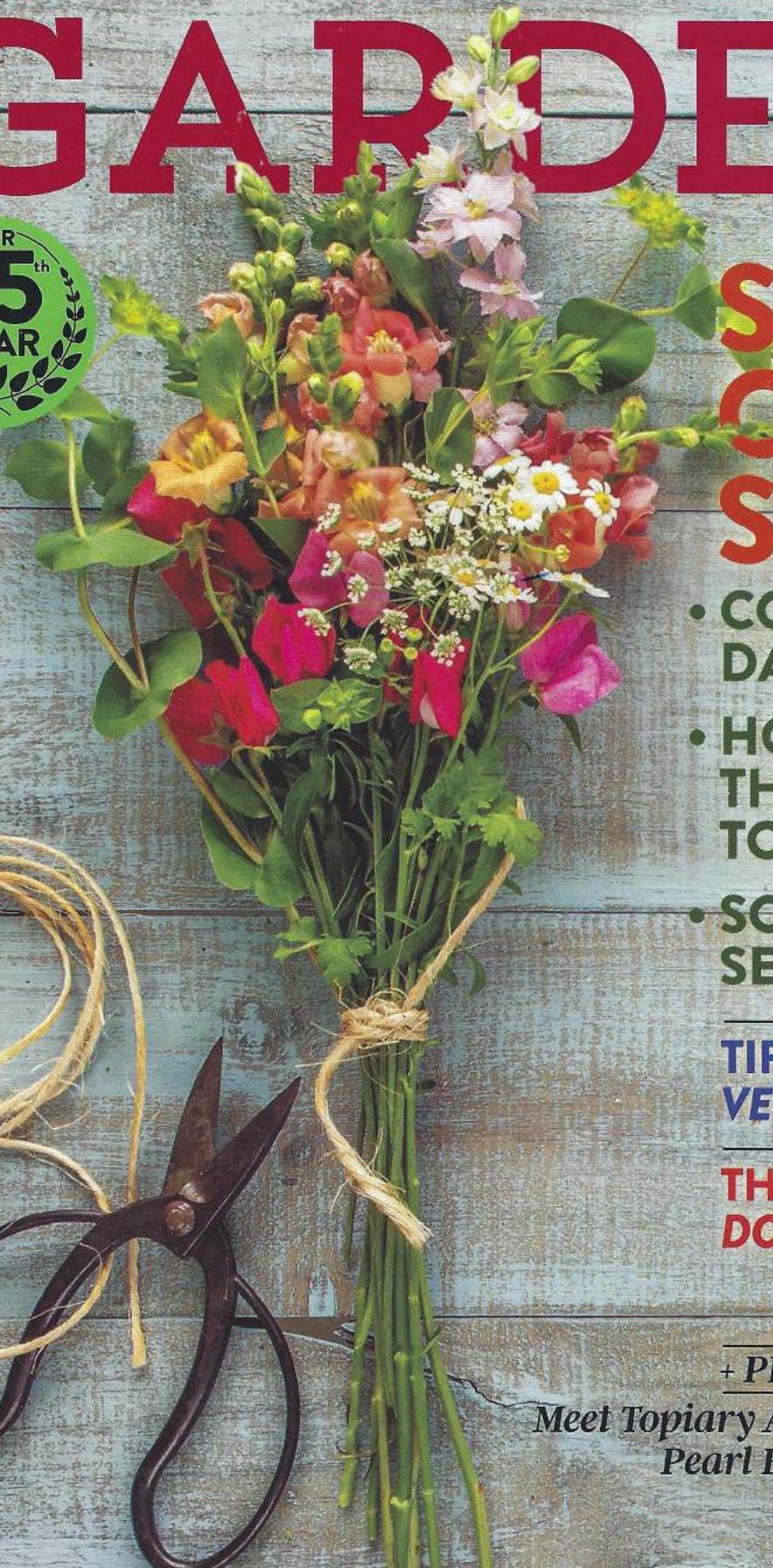


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How to Tame a Slope

A deft garden designer shows her skills, and her colors, in her own backyard.

Where other people see problems, Barbara Katz sees possibilities. It's a mark of an experienced garden designer: She's not fearless, but she is confident.

Barbara is the owner of London Landscapes, near Washington, D.C. Her college degree is in theater, which she followed up with courses in garden design in England. She worked in London for a year and a half before opening her business in Bethesda, Maryland. For more than 30 years, she has been designing and installing gardens of every style and size—all of them full of color and life.

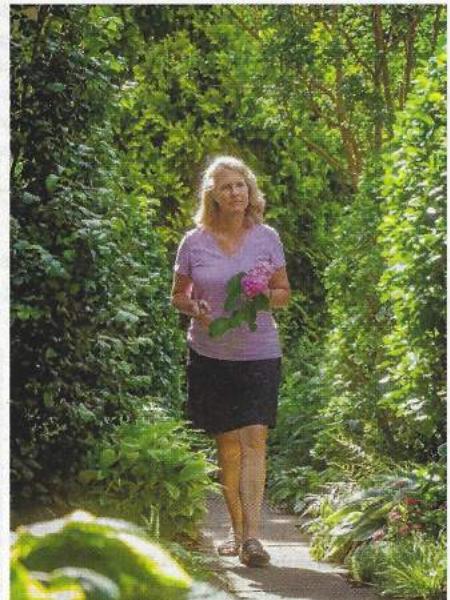
Her own backyard presented a formidable challenge. The lot slopes up from the back of the house to the property line, rising about 12 feet from the back door to a nearly 200-year-old white oak at the top. A steep site may seem intimidating, but “it’s really a wonderful opportunity,” Barbara says. A sloping garden is a little like a theater viewed from the stage itself, she says. “Plants reveal themselves to you in ways they can’t on flat terrain.”

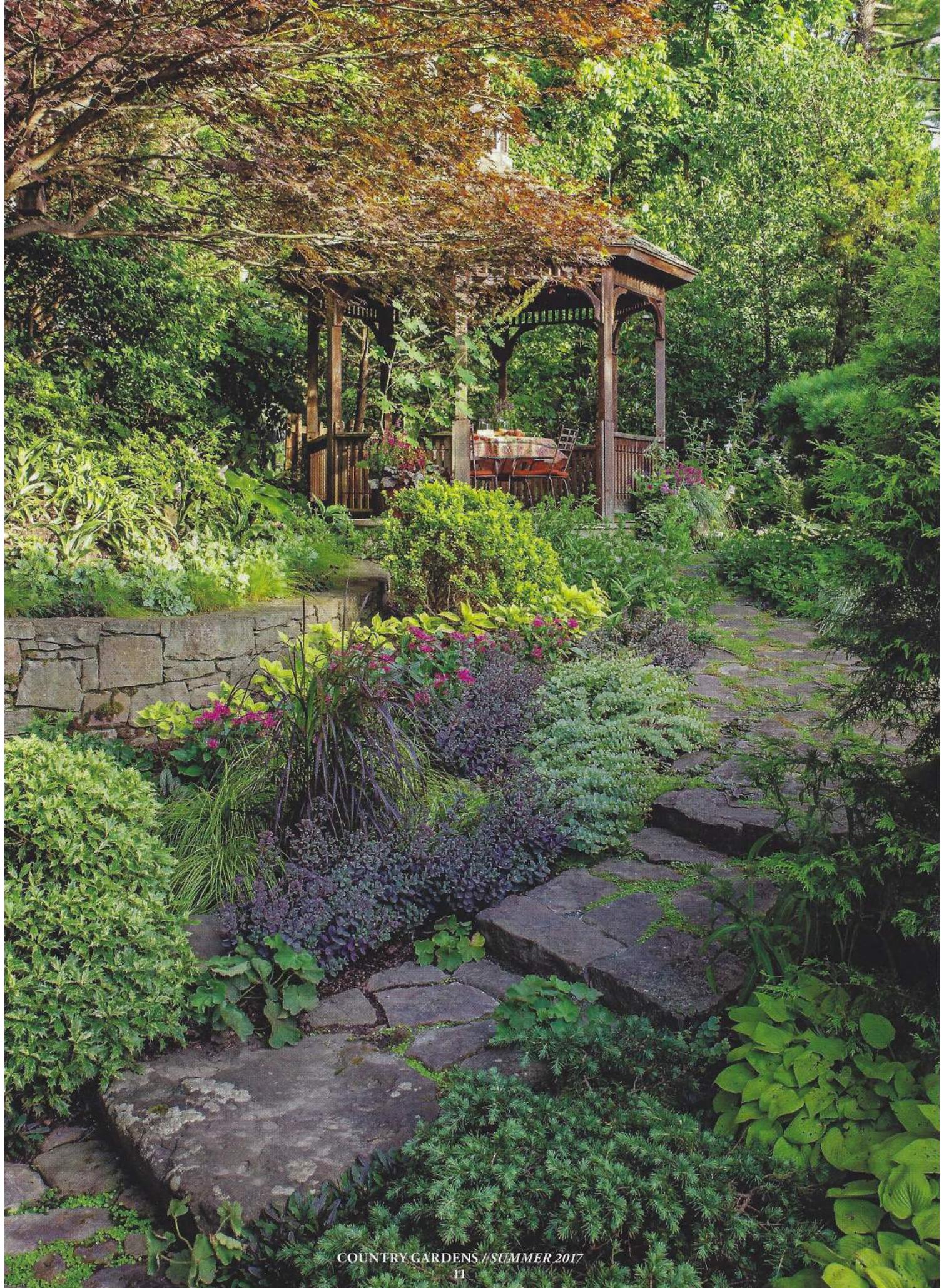
To turn the slope into a garden, Barbara first carved a generous patio just outside the sliding-glass doors from the kitchen and living area across the back of the house. To keep rainwater from running down the slope and onto the patio, French drains channel the runoff to flat areas where it can percolate into the soil. The flagstone patio, laid on a bed of stone dust, is highly permeable itself.

Stone retaining walls define a couple of terraces on the slope, and wide steps lead visitors up to experience the exuberant planting. “It’s a garden that draws you into all its nooks and crannies,” Barbara says. “Every square foot is valuable, and it’s great to interact with it all.”

To one side of the stairs, water splashes down the slope into a series of shallow pools connected by graceful falls. Barbara started laying out the watercourse with a rough sketch, then marked her ideas on the ground with landscaping flags and spray paint.

OPPOSITE: It's hard to imagine a closer faraway place than your own backyard, especially when it's as artfully designed as Barbara Katz's dense and exuberant garden. This part of the garden is crowded with plants, but the big fieldstones advance at a measured pace, so you can appreciate the garden's details. The gazebo is sited to catch the last rays of the sun every day, and the path to it “is as rambunctious and country as you can get,” Barbara says. **LEFT:** From the path, the eye follows the cascading waterfall down to the patio, a more formal outdoor space. **BETWEEN:** Barbara takes time to notice the details during a stroll through the garden.





The water animates the garden. The sound of moving water, the way the light sparkles in the quiet pools, and the birds the water attracts all give the garden a mood that the space alone—without water—could never achieve, she says.

Plants in great abundance fill out the design. “I’m a crazy, crazy plant nut,” Barbara says. “I’m like a magpie. I’m attracted to stuff.” But chaos is not her style. She manages colors carefully to keep the peace in her flowerbeds. On one side of the garden, Barbara chose plants with flowers, foliage, stems, or berries all in tones of orange, white, and purple. She permits herself no yellow in this area. On the other side, yellow, pink, blue, and maroon take over. The disciplined division of the palette is a crucial restraint in these rich plantings, but the effect is entirely natural.

Annual flowers are an essential part of the plan: They’re too hardworking to overlook, Barbara says. She makes room for annuals in the beds themselves and in flowerpots,

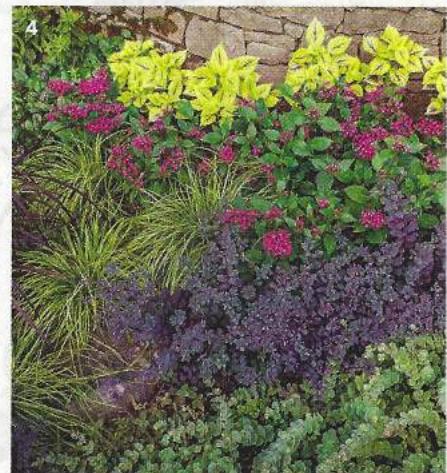
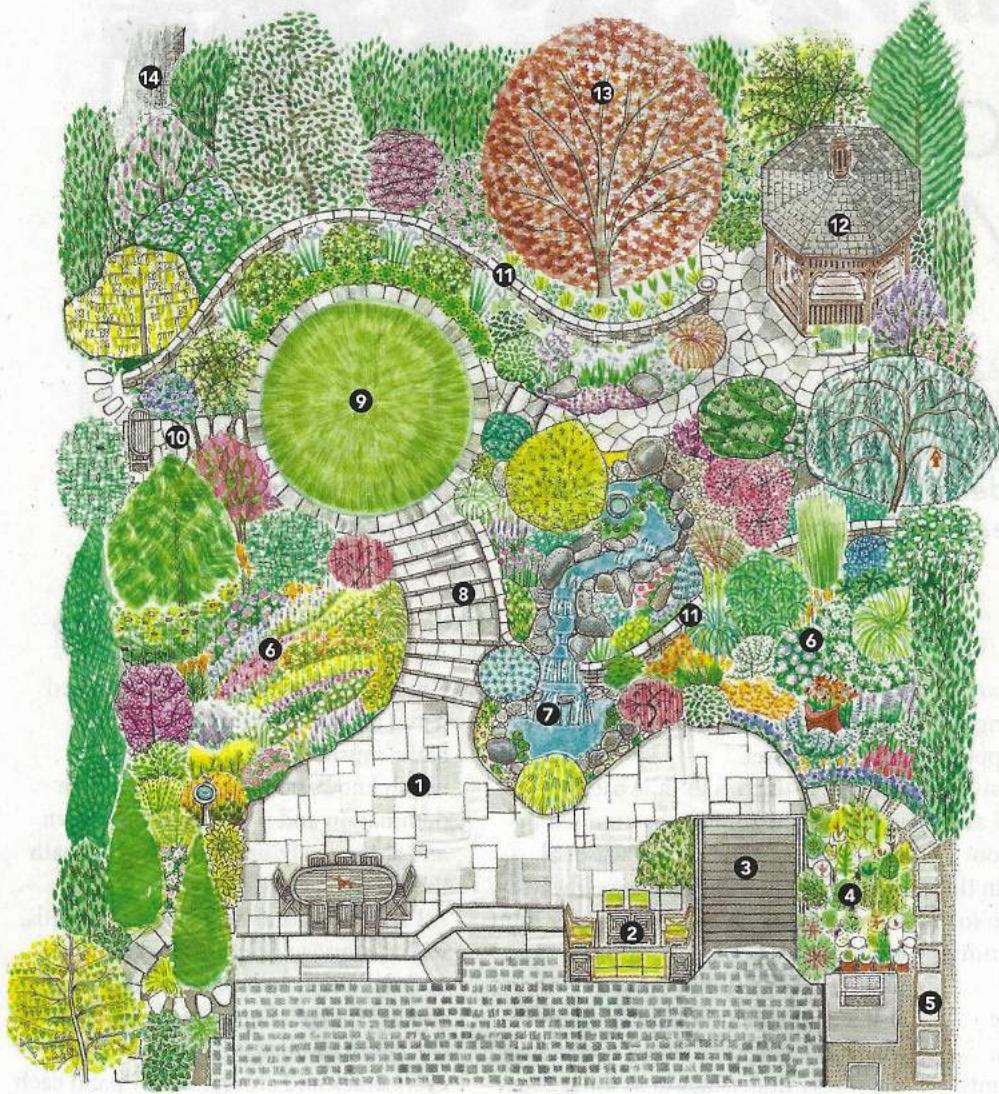
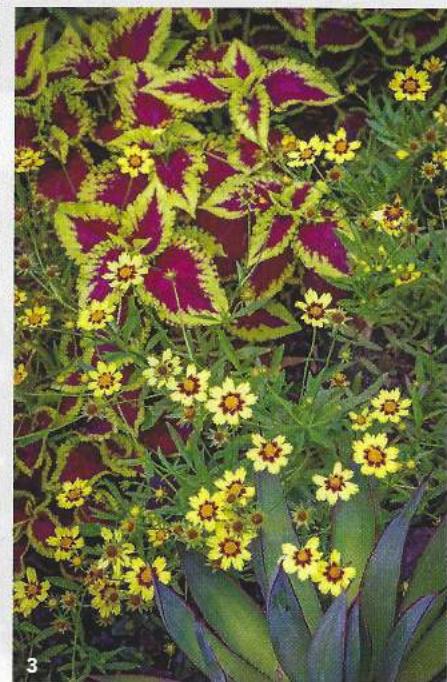
in which she experiments with color combinations to complement the dominant palettes in the flowerbeds. Annuals are “glorious, impermanent, and cool,” she says. If you don’t make use of them, “it’s a lost opportunity.”

If you’re looking for ideas for a low-maintenance garden, busy garden designers like Barbara are the people to ask; they have little time to maintain their own gardens. Barbara needs to step into her beds to prune here and there and do a little weeding, but she depends on a choice selection of “incredibly well-behaved” shrubs and perennials. She may make an occasional exception, but plants that are susceptible to diseases or that need deadheading or staking are not on her list. “The old English style, where everything is staked and perfect—nobody has time for that,” she says. In her own backyard, especially, she wants to be able to sit back and enjoy the show. 

For more information, see Resources on page 110.



1. Nature seems to have had a hand in the design of the garden’s water feature. Meticulous work in the placement of the stones paid off, Barbara says. She framed the water feature with perennials and shrubs. 2. The circle of grass at the top of the garden stairs is a resting place for the eye, Barbara says. “It’s a little quieter here,” she says, “but you’re still embraced by plantings all around.” 3. A playful combination of ‘Kong Red’ coleus and ‘Cosmic Eye’ coreopsis with agave ‘Blue Glow’. 4. Bright ribbons of annuals—coleus ‘Gay’s Delight’ and pentas ‘Starcluster Rose’—are woven through the garden behind Carex ‘Eversheen’ and two sedums, *S. sieboldii* and *S. Sunsparkler ‘Dazzelberry’*.



GARDEN AT A GLANCE **KATZ**

1. Lower patio
2. Seating area
3. Basement stairs
4. Shrub nursery
5. Side entrance
6. Color-coordinated flowerbeds
7. Water feature
8. Garden stairs
9. Grass circle
10. Secret patio
11. Curving garden wall
12. Gazebo
13. 'Bloodgood' Japanese maple
14. 160-year-old white oak

PLANTINGS: COREOPSIS**PAGES 8-9****Coreopsis sources include:**

Bluestone Perennials; 800/852-5243; bluestoneperennials.com.
 High Country Gardens; 800/925-9387; highcountrygardens.com.
 Lazy S'S Farm Nursery; lazysfarm.com.
 Prairie Moon Nursery; 866/417-8156; prairiemoon.com.

DESIGN NOTEBOOK**PAGES 10-13**

Garden design—Barbara Katz, London Landscapes, LLC, Bethesda, Maryland; 301/229-1821; londonlandscapes.com.

Mail-order plant sources include:

Digging Dog Nursery; 707/937-1130; diggingdog.com.
 Far Reaches Farm; 360/390-5114; farreachesfarm.com.
 Graceful Gardens; 607/387-5529; gracefulgardens.com.
 Joy Creek Nursery; 503/543-7474; joycreek.com.
 Putnam Hill Nursery; 443/722-2012; putnamhillnursery.com.
 Santa Rosa Gardens; santarosagardens.com.

WEEKEND GARDENER**PAGES 16-17**

Twenty-inch glazed ceramic pot; 10-inch glazed swirl pot; 12-inch glazed ceramic saucer—Piney Ridge Greenhouse, 6355 NW 51st St., Johnston, IA 50131; 515/276-9554; pineyridgegreenhouse.com. **Smartpond Water Feature Kit** (70 GPH submersible pump with legs, filter box, extension tube, and nozzle heads)—Smartpond; smart-pond.com. (Or find Smartpond products at Lowe's; lowes.com.) **Red Cheyenne gravel**—Earl May Seed & Nursery; earlmay.com. **Rose quartz**—Iowa Outdoor Products; 515/277-6242; iowaooutdoorproducts.com.

BREAKING GROUND**PAGES 22-25**

For more information about the WOW Flower Farm, visit wowfarm.biz.

The Cook and Her Farmer—Oakland, California; thecookandherfarmer.com.

PLANTING WITH PETALS**PAGES 32-37**

For more information about LynnVale Studios, visit lynnvale.com.

The farm will be holding a workshop, "The Farmer Florist: Masters Workshop," August 9-10, 2017. The workshop will examine what it takes to build a successful flower farm and farmer-florist venture. Students

will visit LynnVale Studios and farm, an 8th-generation family-owned farm. For details and registration, visit lynnvale.com.

A CUT ABOVE**PAGES 38-45**

For more about Pearl Fryar's garden, visit pearlfryar.com.

For more from Pearl Fryar, consider:

Outstanding American Gardens: A Celebration: 25 Years of the Garden Conservancy; Harry N. Abrams; 2015; 272 pages.

A FARM IN THE SKY**PAGES 46-51**

Uncommon Ground—1401 W. Devon Ave., Chicago, IL 60660; 773/465-9801 (first certified organic rooftop farm in the United States); and 3800 N. Clark St., Chicago, IL 60613; 773/929-3680 (first certified organic brewery in Illinois); uncommonground.com.

LET THE SUN SHINE**PAGES 52-57**

For more information about Robert Adzema, visit robertadzema.com.

For more information about the North American Sundial Society, visit sundials.org.

For more from Robert Adzema, consider:

The Great Sundial Cutout Book by Mable Jones and Robert Adzema; Dutton Adult; 1978; 104 pages.

FRESH OFF THE VINE**PAGES 58-65****Seed sources include:**

High Mowing Organic Seeds; highmowingseeds.com.
 Johnny's Selected Seeds; 877/564-6697; johnnyseeds.com.
 Baker Creek Heirloom Seeds; 417/924-8917; rareseeds.com.

ADDICTED TO DAYLILIES**PAGES 66-71**

Garden design consultant—Gordon Hayward; haywardgardens.com.

Daylily sources include:

Perfect Perennials; 717/792-0021; kendidaylilies.com.
 Heavenly Gardens; 614/419-1781; heavenlygardens.com.
 Don Herr Daylilies; 717/569-2268; donherrdaylilies.com.

For more information about daylilies, consider: The American Hemerocallis Society; daylilies.org.

A SPARKLING GARDEN**PAGES 72-79**

Garden design—Charlie Thigpen's Garden Gallery, Birmingham, Alabama; 205/328-1000; charliethigpensgardengallery.com.

Landscape installation—Joey Bischoff, Birmingham, Alabama; 205/365-8333.

Mountain View chairs—adapted from Wave Hill chairs by students in a building-trades class at Blacksburg High School in Blacksburg, Virginia, with design consultation by Elissa Steeves. The original Wave Hill chair plans can be ordered online; to obtain an order form, go to: wavehill.org/media/uploads/general_pdfs/shoporderformv2.pdf. **Fire pit**—bentintoshape.net. **Glass rocks**—Gabbert Cullet Co. (wholesale only); gabbertcullet.com. **Glass gravel**—look for a supplier near your home as glass is heavy to ship. **Hay ring**—available from local farm supply stores, such as Tractor Supply Co.; tractorsupply.com.

IT'S A DOG PARTY!**PAGES 80-87**

For more information about the Kankakee County Humane Foundation, visit k3humanefoundation.org.

TRIP TO BOUNTIFUL**PAGES 88-95**

Metal artist (trellises, teepees, and arbors)—Ray Huston, Deezines Custom Metal, Eagle Creek, Oregon; 503/630-2256; rayhustondeezines.com. **Garden art** (pear sculpture)—Marta Farris; martafarris.com.

Plant sources include:

Cistus Nursery; 503/621-2233; cistus.com.
 Joy Creek Nursery; 503/543-7474; joycreek.com.
 Dancing Oaks; 503/838-6058; dancingoaks.com.
 Gossler Farm Nursery; 541/746-3922; gosslerfarms.com.

For more information about The Hardy Plant Society of Oregon, visit hardyplantsociety.org.

For more from Linda Wisner, visit wisnercreative.com.

A CHERRY LIFE**PAGES 96-105**

For more information about Door County, local farmers markets, and pick-your-own cherries in Door County, visit doorcounty.com. The county's website includes a cherry timeline, so you can plan your visit around the cherry-blossom time or in cherry-harvesting season.

Seaquist Orchards Farm Market—11482

Hwy. 42, Sister Bay, WI 54234; 800/732-8850;