

Member Spotlight: Anne Van Handel



I am married to Richard and have four children (my two children – Melissa and Justin and his two children – Chad and Kasandra). We have a dog, Tia and a cat, Vega. I went to school to be a machine tool operator. Also, before I was 18, I lived in eight states all over the country because my father was a Navy sailor (not counting California three times). Shortest six months, longest three years. I enjoy living in this area because Wisconsin is where I am from. I like the lakes, rivers and woodland. The weather isn't too bad.

My hidden talent is that I can whistle a happy tune and I'd like to learn more about art. My crowning achievement was being a single parent for 13 years. I had a full time job. My bills were paid, the kids always had food and we had a decent home. There was always a garden.

As a master gardener, the plant sale is my favorite volunteer opportunity. I like to do set up and haven't done the same job twice. There are lots to do and many people to get to know. I enjoy all the parts of gardening, why stop at one thing. My garden is always evolving. Like nature, there are trees that fall, drought and freezes. Mostly I change my mind. Weeding for a little while in the evening seems to have a calming effect on me. When I'm not gardening, my mother and my daughter join me shopping at rummage sales and thrift shops for nothing in particular. I also enjoy visiting my husband's relation in Ft. Lauderdale, FL. I can't miss "Survivor" on television and enjoy short reads (mostly magazines). Good Housekeeping covers a lot of stuff. Of course, I'm reading Shades of Grey right now!

If I could have one wish granted, I wish to be healthy and have lots of friends. If money were no object, I would like to change to having a part time job. I would also take my time and travel out west. I would like to live in an adobe house and see the big sky. It sounds romantic, doesn't it?

– Jess Wickland