

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Kathy Strickler Class of 2015

Kathy traveled around the states for 24 years with her husband, Jim, son Travis and identical twins, Michele and Katie before settling back in her hometown of Appleton, Wisconsin. While looking for a home, they found one which met their needs. New to them was the koi pond and the Asian inspired garden. Kathy had never gardened before and it seemed like a challenge she would enjoy.

As a welcome gift, a friendly neighbor shared some hostas as Kathy's first plants to call her own. "You can't kill 'em," the neighbor told her. She was right! Kathy has added Annabelle hydrangeas which she likes since they make a statement with their large blooms and last throughout the summer.



Woodstock, the pond guy, does tours of aquascape ponds

throughout the country which she can relate to owning a pond.

Learning to maintain a koi pond has given the Stricklers a challenge. In spring, the pond needs to be assessed for any changes that may have happened over the winter. Summer water levels need to be monitored. When fall comes, the fish are removed from the pond and overwintered in their garage while a netting covers the pond to keep falling leaves out. To keep the neighborhood hawk from enjoying a fish dinner, the trees shelter the fish, and an artificial owl seems to intimidate him/her also. Penny, their cavalier spaniel does her best to keep the four-legged critters away too.

Kathy loves being outside and doing something physical. Donning leggings or capris, t-shirt and of course a visor and sunglasses, she enjoys watching and feeding the fish. Their yard has several Asian statues, Japanese lanterns, a pagoda, and a gong. Decorative screens, bird houses and feeders, and several seating areas make it a peaceful place to enjoy the beauty a garden has to offer. She is relaxed in her happy place.

Most of Kathy's volunteer hours are at Riverview Gardens. She enjoys the camaraderie and the mission "to help our community members in need to be a part of their own solution." When winter comes and Riverview is quiet, she and Jim travel to Chicago to visit their son and family and to Texas to visit the girls and their families as well as other gardens throughout the states.

