

Garden Kalendar: July 2020

This July 2020 Garden Kalendar blog post is composed of edited excerpts from my daily garden journal written in July-September 2019, accompanied in brackets by my occasional commentaries on those passages. This text represents about 50% of the total journal, focusing on entries discussing either the Coe Alumni House Garden or my vegetable garden near Wickiup Hill Outdoor Learning Center. The italicized quotations inserted into the Kalendar are from *A Celebration of Gardens* (Timber Press, 1991), an anthology of writings on gardens assembled by Sir Roy Strong, the long-time director of the Victoria and Albert Museum and eminent authority on garden history. ~Bob

Just as an un-assorted assemblage of mere words, though they may be the best words in our language, will express no thought, or as the purest colours on an artist's palette—so long as they remain on the palette—do not form a picture, so our garden plants, placed without due consideration or definite intention, cannot show what they can best do for us.
~Gertrude Jekyll, "A Definite Purpose in Gardening" (1905)

3 July 2019. At the Coe garden in the morning. Rita [a Coe student who worked as my garden assistant at Coe during the summer and helped with my vegetable garden at Wickiup] and I focused on pulling sedge out of the NE quadrant of the lawn. By 11:00 a.m. the area was reasonably clean: still a few individuals sprinkled around but the yellowish-green patches of sedge that had been so noticeable when we began are gone. Now we're ready to tackle the SE section.

The other major job for the morning was cleaning up the "M," "L," and "C" beds in front of the patio. Rita was tasked with cutting back the New England asters in "M," including one stalk already in bloom, two months before we want them blooming. Meanwhile I focused on cutting back the penstemon, spiderwort, and daisies. I also pulled up several solitary asters in the "C" bed. The daylilies will soon be in full bloom, and I'd like to eliminate distractions from their display.

This afternoon Rita and I went to Wickiup. The temperature was in the mid 80s so not incredibly hot, but the humidity was intense and there was almost no breeze. I found the heat oppressive, and I was taking breaks every 15 minutes—and sweating even when sitting in the shade. Rita was weeding and got sick shortly after drinking from her water bottle. We had driven separately, and once she felt better she drove back to campus. I would have quit early, but a rain cell passed south of us. A quick drop in temperature and a steady breeze made the working conditions much more comfortable. I fertilized a row of eight tomatoes and then covered the north side of their livestock panel support with a layer of newspapers and mulch. Earlier I had weeded the bed with the eggplants and added a fertilizer/compost mix around each plant. I finished the

afternoon by harvesting a gallon of snap peas, including some snow peas that had moved beyond the “harvest me as a snow pea” phase.

Despite having been gone in June on the three-week trip to Scotland, the garden overall looks reasonably good, but there are still areas over-run by weeds. All of the long west-side bed is inundated with unwanted invaders. The two grape beds need serious weeding, and I have not yet finished constructing the wire supports for all the vines. The asparagus bed is full of weeds, as is the row of okra and tomatillos. The pathway around the watermelon bed has not yet been weeded, and I need to weed the SE corner of the garden so I can finish construction of the new wooden raised bed. The whole east daffodil bed is rife with quack grass, which will be a nightmare to remove. I hate seeing these areas of the garden so unkempt, making it impossible to follow through on planting projects—such as sowing zinnias in the daffodil bed. In my list of weedy areas I forgot to mention the small blueberry bed. I’ve cleared that of weeds twice this year and now the small bushes are buried again in foxtail and a tall weed for which I have no name. The invaders’ pressure is unrelenting. Ah, the joys of gardening.

4 July. Celebrated the 4th by working at the church garden for four hours this morning, only the second time I’ve been in the garden this summer. But by some miracle it’s not yet a lost cause. Many weeds, grass, small trees (dozens of Tree of Heaven seedlings), and hyssop, but the basic structure is intact, many perennials look good, and the daylilies are in bloom. With a few more hours, it should look okay. I do need to build a fence around the bed where the beans and peppers will be planted to protect them from rabbits—which are definitely in the area.

After lunch was Wickiup. It was another hot day. Last night we received almost an inch of rain in town but nothing at Wickiup. Most of the plants are okay, but I will need to do some watering with younger seedlings—a row of carrots and a row of yellow zucchini. My main focus was weeding the okra. These plants are still rather small, so I gave them a mix of compost and Territorial fertilizer, then watered them and covered the surrounding soil with newspaper and fresh mulch. I used that combination with a row of tomatoes last week and they are already looking healthier. I also put papers and mulch around the bed of Lebanese zucchini and a 16' row of tomatoes at the south end of the garden. I finished the day by unloading from the pick-up another wheelbarrow load of horse manure, spreading it on the big compost pile. Two more loads to go and the pickup will be ready for a load of fresh, hard-wood mulch.

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5 July. The anniversary of Dad's passing, 24 years ago, 1/3 of my lifetime. Not likely I will be around 24 years from now—though one never knows.

I started the day with four hours at Coe, the first half spent in the garden shed, writing comments on a paper K. is submitting for a conference in Florida. When I did get into the garden, most of my time was on my hands and knees, pulling nut sedge out of the SE lawn section and hoeing weeds from the gravel walkway. I can see fresh sedge emerging in the two western sections but in much smaller numbers than before. We might be making progress; on the other hand, a lot of crabgrass is now appearing in the NE section, a depressing development. As for good news, the "dead" wisteria under the pergola has exploded with new growth. Last week, I found no evidence the wisteria had survived the winter. I was preparing to dig up the carcass when I discovered several fresh vines. Amazing.

After lunch, I went into the back yard to harvest black raspberries. While I was picking, our new neighbor let her two dogs out of the house, and they immediately ran toward me, vigorously barking. The larger black dog ran into the raspberry bed, trampling down several canes, and acting quite aggressively. Both mad and frightened, I yelled at the neighbor that I did not appreciate having the dogs charging into our raspberries. The neighbor said she was going to have a fence installed between our two properties, but I thought to myself that still does not excuse the failure to control her own dogs. Not wishing to exacerbate the conflict any further, I silently walked back into the house, carrying with me a half-filled container of raspberries.

At 5:30 I drove to Culvers, ate supper (an okay Reuben but good fries) and then to Wickiup, where I worked until 9:00. It was still hot and very muggy, but I was able to keep moving. Spent most of my time in the SE corner, trying to clear the area where the new raised steel bed will go. I also cleared out a row of peas and radishes that had gone to seed and weeded a row of Yukon Gold potatoes while doing an intensive search for potato beetles, adults or larva, but never found any. I harvested half a pint of black raspberries from a single Black Jewel raspberry plant. That plant is a real horse, much too large for its narrow bed: it needs to be moved to a bed on the west side of the garden where it will have more room to roam.

. . . then we pitched the sodden tents, and having lit a fire made some tea. There was ample time before dusk to climb the steep rock stairway which led towards the upper valley and the pass; and with my rucksack on my back I started off. A thin mist, gelid with half-frozen moisture, was driving gustily over the ridge, and every now and then a shower of rain swooped down, blotting out the mountains and chilling me to the bone. Between the showers, the pale

winding-sheet of the mountain gleamed bleakly.

But if the weather was discomfiting, the scene which revealed itself to me as soon as I had ascended the first flight of rocks, compensated for every inconvenience. I was breathless, not merely with the ascent: the valley was alight with flowers! Rhododendrons, dwarf in stature, yet hoary with age, sprawled and writhed in every direction. I trod them underfoot, priceless blooms which many men have yearned to see. You could not walk without crushing them, the whole rock floor was hotly carpeted, and over the cliffs poured an incandescent stream of living lava. When I saw that I looked down on twenty-five distinct species of Rhododendron, more than half of which had never been noticed by man—nor had been since, for that matter—I speak the cold truth. It was immense. Aladdin’s cave contained nothing to equal this glut of treasure. Could one but reproduce a pale imitation of that scene in England, scarcely would men believe their eyes. Though almost sick with excitement I proceeded methodically. I collected on the spot each species, gave it a serial number, wrote a description of it, and then pressed and dried my specimens. Then in October, I collected ripe seed of every one: aromatic anthopogons, wide-flowered saluenses, scalding scarlet neeriiflorums, apple-blossom glaucums, the whole tide-rip of them. Finally I brought seeds home and they were soon in a hundred English gardens.

~F. Kingdon Ward, The Romance of Gardening (1935)

6 July. Finally, a break in the humidity. Temp in low 80s, breeze out of the north, cloud cover mixed with blue skies: a lovely day for gardening, after a week of miserable mugginess. At Coe this morning doing the same old stuff: hoeing gravel walkways and pulling sedge. The sedge offensive concentrated on the SE section, the last quadrant we have worked on. A lot of nut sedge is reappearing in the NW section—though not as bad as it was. Maybe we’re making progress. [One year later: there has been a dramatic decrease in the sedge in the summer of 2020; those many hours of hand pulling last summer did make a difference.]

Spent an hour cleaning the “C” bed:

- Pruned the viburnum (and its partner in the “L” bed).
- Cut back most of the Husker Red penstemon and the spiderworts.
- Pulled up a lot of volunteer New England asters.
- Cut back the cushion spurge, the goatsbeard, and other foliage so we can use the path with the stepping stones as a shortcut through the flower bed.
- Cut back on several spreading cranesbill.

In the afternoon at Wickiup. Beautiful weather with a northern breeze that made it feel like a day in the Boundary Waters. I just needed a lake and a canoe. Lacking those

necessities, I finished cleaning up the SE corner, new home of a stainless steel raised bed. I got it positioned so it was reasonably level. Filled it with a mixture of soil, compost, and manure. Maybe I'll even manage to plant a cover crop for the fall. [A dream I didn't achieve.]

As for harvesting, I picked 10 green zucchini—only a couple larger than I would prefer. The real bonanza was the Contender green beans: incredible yield for a 10' row and the beans were just the right size. Also harvested a few of the dragon tongue beans, which were a total failure last year because of rabbits. I was saddened to discover when preparing supper that the tongues lose their purple spots when cooked, but they proved to be quite tender and only needed to be cooked 6-7 minutes. I also harvested two yellow onions, seven Daikon radishes, one nice-sized white kohlrabi, 8-10 Yukon Gold potatoes, and a big mess of Oregon snow peas—which must now be treated as snap peas. No tomatoes, but still a lovely early July harvest.

12 July. Rita and I were pulling sedge out of the lawn when a woman walking through the garden asked what we were doing. When I explained our primitive tactics for removing the sedge, she became very excited about our refusal to use chemical herbicides. She proceeded to explain in great detail about a series of confrontations she has had with landlords who insist on using suspect chemicals on the lawns where she has lived. It was heartening to hear about her determination to advocate friendlier environmental practices. Her recital of recurrent conflicts was finally terminated when a child attending College for Kids showed up in the garden, hoping her mother would take her home.

One other task this morning was a decision to trim back several perennial sunflowers covered with thousands of red aphids. I had read that small invasions of these aphids should not be a major concern, but this huge colony of sap-suckers was clearly draining the flowers. Since the aphids were congregating at the top of each flower stem, we cut them off, dropped the cuttings with attached aphids into a plastic garbage bag, and dumped the bag in the garbage.

This afternoon after lunch I was really exhausted, so I took a 90-minute nap, and then poured myself a glass of Pepsi to help get the system back up to speed. I fixed an early supper of grated zucchini and onions fried in olive oil and mixed with two beaten eggs, shredded cheddar cheese, and small bits of sausage. Served with two slices of toast and some of our Bread & Butter pickles from 2017. Darn good. I then drove out to Wickiup, arrived about 6:15 and worked until 9 pm. One job was weeding the watermelon bed, covering the bed with a newspaper/straw mulch, and watering the

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eight Ali Baba plants. One vine started in the greenhouse, is quite large, covering a third of the bed. The others were not sown until after I returned from Scotland but are quickly catching up. [As it turned out, it was an excellent watermelon crop, the eight plants producing far more watermelons than my wife and I could possibly consume.]

One last bonus to the day: a stunning sunset, the clouds richly cast in pinks and magentas. It was a glorious benediction to an evening spent worshiping in this garden sanctuary.

13 July. Tonight, after my shower, I was preparing to trim my beard when I found a tick in my beard. It didn't move when I brushed against it, so I got a pair of tweezers and tried to position the "jaws" of the tweezers as close as possible to my skin. I then clamped down hard and twisted. The tick immediately came off, and I could see no evidence of any remaining body part—though the angle was not good for seeing into my beard. I'll have MVM check it out when she gets back from this week's trip to Oklahoma. Tonight she is in Clay Center, Kansas, visiting old friends, and tomorrow morning she will be attending the 8:00 a.m. service at Fancy Creek United Methodist, the church where we were married over 50 years ago. Meanwhile, I'm leading the service at our little church here in C.R. At the moment I feel prepared, but who knows how it will play out.

15 July. Went to Wickiup after supper, arriving about 6:15 pm. A lovely evening, with a steady southern breeze, but I felt very depressed after entering the garden. A coon (or coons) had destroyed the four tomato plants I had transplanted two days ago. Each plant was uprooted and the soil around each plant was churned up, the coons apparently digging for something. Perhaps they were attracted to some ingredient—such as blood meal—in my fertilizer mix. It is intriguing that they only attacked the new plants and did not destroy any of the well-established ones. They pulled up some peppers, basil, eggplants, and two marigolds in the round bed—an area previously sprayed with an egg mixture that is supposed to repel such varmints.

After cleaning up the damage, I spent most of the evening watering, weeding potatoes, and covering some beds with fresh mulch. I weeded the oldest bean row: though the Provider bush beans have never grown very large, they have been consistently productive. Before leaving the garden, I did harvest some green and yellow bush beans, two cucumbers, two peppers, two zucchini, and a small number of raspberries. As I was closing the garden gate, I spent a moment looking at the new

moon in the eastern sky, near the horizon, the man-in-the-moon's facial features so distinct.

16 July. Feels like a miracle: it's raining. No rain prediction in day's weather forecast, but the forecasters clearly missed a butterfly flapping its wings somewhere. I had just arrived at Coe to turn off the sprinkler—which has been running non-stop since yesterday morning—and pick up the large live trap so we can catch a Wickiup coon. There were a few sprinkles while at Coe, but it finally let loose as I merged on to I-380. The clouds looked dark and the rain looked serious, so I pulled off at the 29th St. exit and came home. We've now had 30 minutes of rain—including a few minutes of an unrestrained downpour. Thank goodness, I won't have to spend any time tomorrow watering. I just hope the Wickiup garden is also experiencing this rainfall. The weather radar on the internet shows rain coming from the northwest, so I feel confident the garden will get some moisture. With this rain freshening up the Coe garden, tomorrow morning might be a good time for early morning, mid-July photos of the daylilies. [It rained again the next day, giving us a total of 3" over the two-day period.]

18 July. Major focus at the garden this morning was cleaning up walkway under the pergola. Thousands of tiny daisy seeds had germinated in the gravel, plus other weeds and diverse debris left on the walkways from trimming spent daisies, wisteria, horsetail, etc. It had been looking a bit trashy, but by noon the area was all "spiffed up."

In the afternoon, when the heat index was nearing 100F, I drove the pickup to Menard's and purchased 36 tan Belgian pavers and five bags of river rocks. These will be used for creating small stone rectangles around the pergola's six wisteria and the two clematis. The rocks and stones added a lot of weight to an old pickup already full of wet, hard-wood mulch, but somehow I got everything to Coe and unloaded. Tomorrow we'll see about creating these eight stone zones.

20 July. Kent gave me a copy of *1000 Gardens You Must See Before You die* (2012). Of course, I had to see how many of these gardens I had already visited. According to my count I have seen 37 of the 1000 gardens. In some cases, the visits were very brief or long ago. It has been 50 years since I was in the Palmengarten in Frankfurt, Germany, and I have only one faint memory of the visit. On the other hand, the book includes several gardens I have visited on multiple occasions, most notably Kew Gardens and the Chelsea Physic Garden in England. Several gardens on the list I would not have

included in a “must see” list—such as the Topiary Park in Columbus, Ohio. On the other hand, how can one create such a list and not include Regents Park in London?

[The July 20 entry was the final entry in that hand-written notebook. My new notebook beginning on July 22 included several entries from a garden journal that I kept in May and June of 2001. Here is the second entry, composed on 19 May 2001, describing my day working in Elisabeth Young’s vegetable garden, a garden near Franklin Middle School that I took care of for 30 years:

Elisabeth’s garden: nearly all planted except for two rows in a corner next to the raspberries. We had one mess of asparagus, but caught it a bit late. . . . We do have some ruby leaf lettuce from seed sown last fall; first pickings will come in a few days. The strawberries are badly overrun with grass, creeping Charlie and a few dandelions. MVM did a lot of weed pulling before it got super buggy. Many blossoms on the strawberries; we’ll see how the berries do, but so far the plants look in good condition.

An entry for 7 June 2001 recorded that we harvested over a gallon of strawberries one evening, evidently a good year for strawberries. That garden did not have a high fence and the strawberry plants were on several occasions eaten to the ground by deer who came from Brucemore and crossed over First Avenue at night.]

*When to the flowers so beautiful
The Father gave a name,
Back came a little blue-eyed one,
All timidly it came.
And standing at the Father’s feet,
And gazing in His face
It said in low and trembling tones,
‘Dear God, the name Thou gavest me,
Alas! I have forgot.’
Kindly the Father looked Him down,
And said, ‘Forget-me-not.’
~Anon.*

22 July. A beautiful day, temp about 80F, some humidity. I had no problem generating a sweat, but conditions so much nicer than previous two weeks. This morning at Coe I watered plants in greenhouse, prepared new mix of compost tea, and fixed a “vegetable smoothie” for the earthworms. In the garden Rita and I both focused on the gravel

walkways. I should have been cleaning up several perennial beds, but as so often the case, I find it hard to ignore the walkways when they are weedy. We did make good progress, but several walkway sections are still demanding attention, including the “A” beds’ avenue.

In the afternoon I took a quick trip to Wickiup before coming home to prepare supper for our guests, Jim and John from Connecticut. At Wickiup I discovered an animal (probably a coon) had eaten the grape jelly lure but had not set off the trap. Tomorrow I’ll reset the trap and try again. Today there was only time for harvesting:

- 2 hills of Rose Finn Apple fingerling potatoes (yielding about 20 potatoes)
- 3 onions
- 1 large Majestic garlic (the biggest I’ve ever grown)
- 5-6 nice-sized cucumbers
- Half dozen Yellowstone carrots (2 quite large)
- Several sweet bell peppers
- 3 Sora radishes
- Half dozen small tomatoes (Yellow Pear and Sungold; the larger tomatoes are not yet ripe)

The evening meal was good, though I had to throw out most of the Contender bush beans: many of them were hollow and tough, clearly hurt by the hot, dry weather. The Dragon Tongue, on the other hand, were all fine and tender.

23 July. Started the day by doing some garden consulting with Jim, who was interested in starting a small herb garden on their condo balcony. Unfortunately, he does not like chives, the easiest herb to grow, but I did give him a box with 3 mints and a solitary basil, plus eight packets of herb seeds. He claims he’s never done any gardening, but when we discussed various options, he appeared to understand what I was talking about—especially when we were “talking basil.”

At Coe I concentrated on the “D” and “E” beds. Did some weeding, clearing space around the front-of-border plants. I pulled up a lot of New England asters and obedient plants that have been expanding into other plant territories (e.g., popping up in the ring of tall stonecrops). After weeding, I mixed together compost with blood meal and bone meal and applied a layer around the front of border plants. I gave everyone a thorough watering and then covered the soil with hard-wood mulch. I should have done this a couple of weeks ago with the astilbe in the “D” bed—which have been notably strained by the lack of moisture, difficulties compounded by how the soil in that area dries out quickly. I also worked with the dahlias in the “E” bed. They are shorter than they

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should be and a couple have rotten stems—though the tubers appear healthy. Not sure what is their problem. For the dahlias I used the compost from the #4 compost bin; the old vegetation was not completely composted but perfectly good for our purposes.

This afternoon I dug up 7-8 black raspberry canes in the back yard and took them to Wickiup, where I planted them in the Z1 row in the garden's NW corner. Planted them with a mix of new compost and a fertilizer mix. I then dug up the Nectar carrots, and one hill each of Yukon Gold, King Harry, and German Butterball potatoes, averaging 8-10 potatoes per hill. I was totally fooled by the King Harry, initially thinking I only got 4 potatoes from that hill. But as I was putting back some soil, I saw a sliver of a potato and remembered that King Harry potatoes often grow far removed from the mother plant. In digging around the perimeter I found five more nice-sized potatoes. [Despite my diligence, I missed several King Harry potatoes, which produced volunteers in the same bed in 2020 and have again proven both productive and elusive.]

Finished the day by digging up the iris bed north of the garden fence, no easy task separating the good from the bad tubers. Much to my surprise, I found a lot of iris borers that had burrowed into the tubers. We will still have plenty of good ones, but I need to be much more attentive in spotting plants that may be harboring this moth larva. I don't recall I have ever seen the moths, which are only active at night.

26 July. All day at Wickiup, primary focus on the iris beds. Finished separating the healthy iris tubers from the grass, weeds, and rotten tubers harboring the iris borer. Killed several dozen larvae, at least one in every clump, but we still ended up with 200 or more viable tubers. With Rita's help, I laid out the thickest, toughest weed control fabric I could find (one that already had holes cut in it for melons). After stretching it out and positioning one side under the garden fence, I stapled it down and cut out six rectangular slots, where we planted about 15 tubers per slot. After watering everyone, we covered the black fabric with a thick layer of straw. One future headache is that the soil still has hundreds of quack grass roots. Even after digging carefully through the bed's soil, I know many of those root sections will survive and generate new grass that will emerge through the holes created for the iris. As for the remaining tubers, the plan is to start a new iris bed on the east side of the garden—plus Rita took a few to give to a friend who is starting a flower garden.

31 July. In the morning at Coe, focusing on the "A" beds corridor. Cleaned up the old Wilderness Field Station bed [where five years ago I brought in several transplants from Coe's Field Station in northern Minnesota, including pearly everlasting and wild

strawberries] and moved from the upper bed a flower (probably some kind of primrose) with large yellow blossoms. Discovered it had an extensive and thick root system, but a high percentage of the roots were rotten. I gave it some fresh compost and watered it thoroughly, but I'm not confident it's going to survive. [It did re-emerge this spring but has not grown much foliage and has not flowered.] That was the only planting today since it took a long time to cut back stuff—such as the goldenrod—and clean out the bed, and it's still not finished.

1 August. Lovely day, delightful morning. When I left at 7:45 a.m. for Ever-Green (to get a load of hard-wood mulch) and then Wickiup, the temp was probably in the mid 60s—and it stayed nice. I worked at Wickiup until 1:00, doing miscellaneous chores, such as clearing weeds from several beds. Biggest hassle was digging up thistle roots buried deep in three raised beds. I also removed weeds around the sweet potatoes and the blackberries. I assembled the 4th rectangular steel bed and carried it to its new home. Later I will get it level and fill it with a soil/compost mix. I did some catchup work with the grapes, tying several vines to the support lines that surround them. Some have had a notable growth spurt. I forgot to mention that I ate my first Wickiup blackberry. A bit bitter, but it had an OK flavor. [A few hours before typing this passage I finished my first full-scale harvest of blackberries from these bushes planted four years ago. Before being pruned, some of the thickest stalks were 10' tall; they have a beautiful white flower and produce large blackberries with an attractive flavor.]

2 August. Began the morning with a trip to Wickiup. Had to be back by 10:15 so I did nothing but harvest: several zucchini (white, green, yellow but no striped ones), 3 peppers, a bunch of tomatoes (including several Berkeley Tie-dye—though because of their mosaic of colors I'm often unsure when they are truly ripe), a bunch of cucumbers, five radishes, and five different beans (mostly Contender and the Italian purple pole beans). I traded the beans, two zucchini, and two cukes for a frozen trout that Dale brought by the garden. From my perspective, a darn good trade.

Once I got home, we started preparing pickles, two recipes. The first, Mary Duncan pickles, is easy and fast. We had them all done and canned by 1:00 p.m. The second recipe for Jim's pickles is more time consuming and involves the cukes in a ice and salt bath for 3 hours before rinsing and drying—but we still had them all canned by 8:00 this evening.

In the afternoon while MVM was in Iowa City taking care of the grandson, I went to Coe. I intended to focus on weeding the lawn, but I discovered many perennials were

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stressed by the lack of rain—such as all the new ferns and Jacob’s Ladders in the “G” bed berm and several herbs in the raised “E” beds. All the basil and oregano had curled leaves. So I spent most of my afternoon walking around with a water hose. It was disheartening to see so many plants weakened by the lack of rain. I’m mad at myself that I wasn’t more attentive. For the last several days I have been focused on the vegetable garden, and the weather has been so pleasant I was unprepared for how quickly the soil moisture conditions had deteriorated. One key failure was not getting fresh mulch down after the last good rain. Before leaving the garden at 6:00, I turned the sprinkler on the NW lawn section. At 10:30 I went to Coe, moved the sprinkler to the SW section, and will let it run through the night.

5 August. Hard core gardening all day. In the morning at Coe I did spot watering, primarily plants in the “A” beds, many added this spring or ones that don’t like the hot sun—such as the foam flowers. Spent 45 minutes digging out crabgrass, sedge, and spurge from the NW lawn quad. Slow, tedious work and after 45 minutes, it was evident I had just begun, another of those Sisyphean garden tasks.

At 10:00, I left Coe and headed for Wickiup, where I did some transplanting, filling in the old raised round bed, my third attempt at planting in this bed, hoping the coons have moved on to other sites for their evening escapades. I also sowed three kinds of peas (one a 30-day snow pea), some more Actia zucchini, and two short rows of radishes. I intended to sow some vining zucchini but ran out of time.

6 August. It rained last night! Received 1.2" at home and the same at Wickiup. This will save me many hours of watering. When I arrived at the Coe garden about 8:15, the whole garden looked revived—and, indeed, I felt revived. To celebrate, I spent over three hours pulling up crabgrass, sedge, and spurge from the SW lawn section. I moved slowly and tried to be thorough. I would estimate that in those three hours I covered 1/8th of the section—which means that at my morning’s tempo it would take 24 hours (i.e., 3 hours a day for 8 days) to finish this one quarter section. On the other hand, the area I was tackling has the thickest colony of crabgrass in the entire lawn, and most of the remaining areas will go much faster. [All that work in 2019 did pay off. The lawn has a few pockets of crabgrass this year, but less than 10% of last year’s “crop”.]

Made two trips to Wickiup. While driving out to the garden on the first trip, I heard on the radio that Toni Morrison had died. I immediately thought this would be an appropriate moment for posting some pithy Morrison quotes to the church website. I worked at the garden for about an hour, doing such tasks as adding mulch to the sweet

potato bed. I also decided on the location for the blue, round steel bed—now permanently positioned next to the Briggs-Farmer “Ms. Scare Deer” sculpture. Once I was home, I worked on the Morrison blog post and drafted a blog post for the Alumni House Garden website.

After supper, it was back to Wickiup for harvesting: three hills of Yukon Gold (moderate sized potatoes, moderate numbers), two hills of Rose Finn Apple fingerlings (about ten potatoes per hill), several white and yellow zucchini, and one green Asti zucchini (the vines in their final death spiral, succumbing to the squash bugs). I also dug up four Majestic garlic, harvested some bush beans, and collected a few small tomatoes.

*The rose is a rose,
And was always a rose.
But the theory now goes
That the apple's a rose,
And the pear is, and so's
The plum, I suppose.
The dear only knows
What will next prove a rose.
You, of course, are a rose—
But were always a rose.
~Robert Frost*

10 August. Even on a weekend, my obsession with the Coe lawn continues, driven by a desire to eliminate the crabgrass and spurge before they can go to seed. The crabgrass is sending out hundreds of seed heads, and I've read that a single crab grass plant can produce up to 150,000 seeds. I don't think the seeds of our crabgrass are fully mature, but I don't trust them. So this morning I ignored everything else calling for attention and concentrated on weeding the lawn. To demonstrate I'm not completely obsessed with just the lawn, I also brought out the hoe and scraped away at two sections of the gravel walkway east of the “C” and “L” beds. While I can see progress, this lawn and walkway work is all removal—progress could only be detected by observers aware of the “before” stage, which means I'm the only one who can see progress because I'm the one person who can compare the “after” with the “before.” And this progress is all a series of small steps, steps that will soon need to be repeated and then repeated again, ad infinitum. Who knows how many seeds are waiting in the grass and the walkways, waiting for this moment. I can't see the seeds, but once one set of plants are removed,

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the replacements soon appear—though I suspect many are springing from root systems not eradicated in the previous cleansing, the survivors of a weed-pulling and hoeing that only goes skin deep.

11 August. Some rain last night and again today. Most of the day at Coe, continuing on the lawn, removing crabgrass and weeds from the two western quads. For some reason I'm finding the task is becoming more pleasurable and satisfying, even though it is taking so many hours, leaving so many other jobs undone. I find it ironic that all of this lawn work is to make the lawn unremarkable, unexamined, invisible. The lawn functions as an inner frame for the perennial flower beds. All of this work is to ensure the lawn does not attract any attention. We don't want it to be screaming, "Look at me!" The goal is to create a quiet lawn, ensuring visitors look elsewhere for color, form, texture, virtuosity. As is true with the gravel walkways, the lawn needs to be self-effacing. And this is achieved by unremitting, repetitious removal of blemishes that, like a teenager's acne, will soon be back.

Rita and I spent the afternoon at Wickiup. She planted about 100 iris tubers along the garden's east fence while I cleaned up the steel raised bed next to the compost bins. During a break, I talked with Rita about producing a short piece of writing for the next *Garden Quarto*. Since she was unsure she could write anything anyone would want to read, I suggested she consider writing on the subject of planting iris tubers. After all, she was now one of the world's leading authorities on the subject, and knew more about iris tubers than 99% of her potential readers. She could begin by listing 100 "things" she had observed when planting the tubers. Once she had that list, it might be surprisingly easy to create a draft of a text, either prose or poetry.

14 August. When I arrived at Coe this morning, I felt like I needed a jacket, the first touch of fall, and it proved to be a beautiful day, one of those ideal gardening days you dream of—and today the dream came true. Most of the day was at Coe, tackling the two western lawn sections. The NW section is now 99% done—plus it has a small English field daisy in bloom! I have no idea where it came from, but it's a delightful addition. The SE section is also quite clean, so it's just chunks of the SW and NE quads that need further attention. I'm not sure I can finish them tomorrow, but I'm going to try.

This afternoon I worked on cleaning up beds "L," "M", and "C": removing dead leaves and flower stalks from daylilies; pulling up foxtail and other weeds sprinkled in the beds; cutting back dead seed heads on yarrow, purple coneflowers, and Husker

Reds. In the next three days, several events are scheduled in the garden and the dining room so I feel some pressure to get things cleaned up.

At 6:30 I drove to Wickiup for two hours. Dale stopped by and informed me that his Dad, Lloyd, had died at his home yesterday morning. It had been a long, slow slide—not much left in terms of quality of life—so I'm sure that for Dale and his family it's a mixture of grief and relief. Lloyd was such a pleasant person, one of the nicest guys I've ever known. While thinking about Lloyd, recalling when he would attend one of my Sunday School classes, I continued weeding the parsnips and a bed of bush beans. Finished the day by harvesting the yellow beans (it had become too dark to see any other colors). I did gather a few tomatoes, including my first real crop of lemon boys and a large Thessalonica, 5 different varieties of cucumbers, and 3 varieties of beets. At the moment, the garden is producing quite vigorously. I have a few wilted leaves on the cucumbers, but have not yet lost a single plant, a stark contrast to last year. I do have all the cucumbers growing up on livestock panels. The improved ventilation and keeping the plants off the ground seems to improve their survival rate.

17 August. Saturday. New students on campus, the opening convocation (when I had to give the Lynch speech about ten years ago), and a reception for parents, family, and new students at the Alumni House. I worked in the garden both morning and afternoon, trying to do last-minute cleaning up before the guests arrived at 4:30. Normally I would skedaddle (wonder what's the history of that word?), but when guests started arriving, I still had plenty to do and I decided to keep working. I concentrated on the middle of the "F" bed, an area around a trio of Stokes asters that had never been cleaned up this summer. For whatever reason, I felt like I wanted to be present when people were in the garden. Usually I'm here by myself—this space my private domain—but today there would be many strangers in the garden, and I wanted to be a part of that scene. Most people ignored me, but I did end up having an enjoyable conversation with a couple from Chicago, who had just said goodbye to their middle child. They did have a question, asking for the name of a Joe Pye Weed, a Monarch magnet at this time of the year. It's interesting how conversations with strangers can be so energizing, even if most of the conversation remains conventional and superficial: we can enjoy a fresh start with someone, a moment relatively free of personal baggage.

In the evening after supper MVM and I went to Wickiup in the CR-V, a harvesting excursion. I spent most of the hour picking bush beans and red pole beans. Also gathered a lot of small tomatoes, including 8-10 of the Wapsipinicon Peach tomatoes, this summer's great discovery. That have an appealing "fuzzy peach" skin and a

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delightful, refreshing taste. The red/pink/green tie-dyes from Baker Creek have also been a great addition—though I've had problems knowing when to pick them before they start to rot. On more than one occasion I've been deceived by their green skin, fooling me into thinking they are not ripe. But they have been the summer's best source for a red slicing tomato in our BLT sandwiches. We also brought home two cantaloupe-style melons—both of which had separated from the vine. I had thought there was a third melon ready for picking, larger than the two we gathered, but I was either mistaken or "someone" had been there before us. We also brought home a few okra, a few cukes, a few potatoes, and two eggplants from plants being attacked by Colorado potato beetles—a troop of larvae and one adult beetle.

18 August. Over 2" rain in home rain gauge! Enuf said. No gardening today. I spent four hours preparing home-made vegetable soup, using peppers, onions, potatoes, turnips, okra, lima beans, red noodle beans, dragon tongue beans, green beans, and carrots. Only non-garden item was a container of Hy-Vee vegetable broth. No seasonings, gluten-free. We had the soup for supper and it was darn good with a surprisingly sweet flavor, though unable to determine the source of that flavor. Froze one 2 pint container.

23 August. After supper I went to Wickiup for about 90 minutes. Started to do some weeding when I realized that my #1 hoe is bent, the steel plate at the wrong angle. I tried to bend it back but made little progress. I have no idea how it became crooked. It's solid steel and it would require a substantial force to change its angle. It's still functional, but the angle is no longer right for the blade entering into the soil. It's remarkable such a small change in the angle could make such a big difference. After trying to get the hoe back in shape, I turned my attention to gathering purple, yellow, and green beans for supper. They were excellent. Meanwhile MVM canned tomato juice this afternoon and another batch of pickles. We have now added over 100 pint and quart jars of canned pickles and beets to our basement food storage. We will soon have more tomatoes, but it's not going to be a big tomato harvest. Due to my poor playing, we ended up with too many plants producing grape-sized tomatoes and not enough full-sized red slicing tomatoes.

*In the dooryard fronting an old farm-house near the white-wash'd palings,
Stands the lilac-bush tall-growing with heart-shaped leaves of rich green,
With many a pointed blossom rising delicate, with the perfume strong I love,*

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*With every leaf a miracle—and from this bush in the dooryard,
With delicate-color'd blossoms and heart-shaped leaves of rich green,
A sprig with its flower I break.
~Walt Whitman, from "When lilacs last in the dooryard bloom'd"*

27 August. Beautiful day; temp in 60s, sunny, low humidity. Perfect gardening weather. Kim (from Colorado) is staying in the Alum House this week, and after she came into the garden this morning, we spent a couple hours conversing while pulling up weeds, crabgrass, and spurge from the SW lawn section. When Kim went into the Alum House to do some writing, I went back to hoeing and raking a gravel walkway. After our lunch at Riley's, I did some yew hedge trimming, the first time this year. Interesting that in 2014, when I first began working in the garden at the beginning of the summer, I initiated my rehabilitation of the garden by trimming the yews. At that time it was all done with hand pruners because I did not own an electric trimmer. The yews that year looked brown and bedraggled—badly damaged by the cold, dry winter wind. Despite this past winter's low temps, we had good soil moisture combined with good snow cover. The yews survived in good shape.

After supper I drove to Wickiup, arriving about 6:25 and staying until a few minutes past 8:00. A beautiful evening. After pulling weeds in the fruit and grape beds, I harvested a few raspberries, a nice bunch of cukes and some sweet peppers, one white zucchini, a big purple eggplant and a long, thin, light purple one. Filled my gallon bucket with tomatoes, Lemon Boy the top producers again this year. I finished the evening harvesting pole beans, though it was dark and hard to see what I was doing.

28 August. Another beautiful day: temp into low 70s, low humidity, ideal working conditions—what a contrast with a month ago. This morning at Coe my primary focus was trimming shrubs and trees. I initially concentrated on the "K" bed yews, walking between the yews and the fence with the 3-foot ladder; slow going, but I'm close to being done. Next challenge will be the "I" bed yews.

The other big task this morning was cutting more limbs from the SW & NW flowering crabs. I cut off several large branches yesterday and piled them next to the gazebo. Today I did more surgery on both trees, cut up the fallen limbs, and placed them in the big green yardy. No problem having it filled by noon. Meanwhile Kim came into the garden and helped for a couple of hours. She did some deadheading on the balloon flowers and cleaned up the daylilies in the "K" bed. Combine her deadheading with my pruning and the result is a much better looking flower bed.

In the afternoon I worked at home, mostly cleaning in and around the raspberry bushes. Removed all the raspberry bushes from the small square raised bed and dug up several large pokeweed. [Two months later, while walking through a National Trust Garden in London, we came upon several large pokeweed (*Phytolacca americana*) being grown as an ornamental plant in a herbaceous border. And there is this wonderful tribute to the pokeweed in this passage from Henry David Thoreau's *Journal*, dated 10 September 1851:

The poke is a very rich and striking plant. Some which stand under the Cliffs quite dazzled me with their now purple stems gracefully drooping each way, their rich somewhat yellowish purple-veined leaves, their bright purple racemes . . . I love to see any redness in the vegetation of the temperate zone. It is the richest color. I love to press these berries between my fingers and see their rich purple wine staining my hand. It asks a bright sun on it to make it show to best advantage and it must be seen at this season of the year. It speaks to my blood.

Although it's a plant with many attractive features, it has not yet spoken "to my blood" and I have not yet been tempted to invite it to thrive either at the Coe garden or in my backyard.] At 3:00 I came inside and started preparing veggies (carrots, fingerling potatoes, onion, peppers, garlic) and rosemary for roasting. Also prepared green beans, sliced tomatoes, and cucumbers mixed with diced onions, vinegar, and sugar. Kim came for supper and is a vegetarian so it worked out nicely to have an all-veggie supper. Except for olive oil, vinegar, & sugar, everything was from the garden, including the melon we had for desert.

1 September. After church service, I went out to Wickiup to harvest veggies so I could make a soup. A good harvest: a huge crop of Cranberry Vermont bush beans, plus some Seychelles pole beans, burgundy pole beans, and Chinese long red noodle beans. Many of the Chinese beans had been pecked on by birds and are about finished for the season. I concluded my bean excursion by gathering a few runner beans, Henderson bush limas, and the lima pole beans. All together, six bean varieties. I then turned to other crops: some carrots, four good-sized yellow onions, tomatoes, peppers, cukes, one watermelon, and one white zucchini. I was guessing the watermelon was not fully ripe, but it was white underneath and the vine looked 90% dead so I took a chance. As it turned out, it was indeed not fully ripe, but it's edible. It's also quite large, so it will reside in our frig for several days.

At the end of my day at Wickiup my stomach was beginning to hurt, and by the time I got home I was in real pain. Sitting at the table, I was able to depod all the limas

and cut out some beans from the red noodle crop, but my stomach was really cramping so I went to bed and stayed there for about five hours, sleeping off and on. At one time I woke up and thought for sure I would throw up, but I didn't. By 9:30 I was beginning to feel better: ate 3 crackers and drank some 7-Up. It's now a few minutes before midnight, and I'm feeling much better. But after that long nap, I'm not sure when I'll ever get sleepy.

While at Wickiup, I suggested to Jim [a professional baker responsible for the garden plot next to mine] that we consider going into a partnership in planting and tending a third garden area between our two allotments and the creek. When the fellows who had previously taken care of that plot decided not to continue gardening there, Jim planted some pumpkins and squash in May, but it became over-run by weeds, including an impressive crop of foxtail. I would like to plant more pumpkins, squash, and melons than my plot allows, and I thought that if we handled this third area collaboratively we would have a better chance of controlling the weeds and ensuring a good harvest from these vine crops. He seemed amenable to the idea—though we will have to arrange an agreement concerning the use of herbicides and pesticides. He periodically sprinkles Sevin on his vegetables, a practice that does not appeal to me. We concluded the conversation by agreeing to revisit this issue at a later date. [As it turned out, we did enter into an informal partnership in the spring of 2020. In an area I have labeled the “west field,” we planted 90 hills of potatoes (15 hills of six varieties) interspersed with 18 different varieties of winter squash, pumpkins, watermelons, cantaloupe, and sweet melons. Jim also agreed that we would not use any “chemicals” in an effort to control unwanted weeds or bugs.]

3 September. Lovely day, though it looked and felt like it might rain (humidity near 80%), but no rain, except for a few random drops. Because of humidity, I was drenched in sweat by the time I finished working at Coe at 1:00. The morning featured the final episode of this season's “trimming of the yews.” By some miracle, the battery for the electric clippers kept charged long enough so I could polish off the back of the “I” bed yews and do all of the “F” yews. While the latter is a long stretch, it is all straight forward trimming and the backside has ample room between the yews and the fence for maneuvering the ladder. While not perfect, the yews look darn good, the best they have looked since I started trimming them in the summer of 2014. It helped there was minimal winter kill and no new gaps in the foliage.

I did take a break from the pruning to shoot a few photos, including a white-flowered anemone in the “A2” bed and a bloom on a black-bead lily which has

magically appeared near the gazebo. I have no idea how it got there. Also shot the first boltonia blossoms in the small bed under the mirror. Although the individual blossoms are quite small, cumulatively they create an orbit of unexpected beauty in the late summer garden.

After lunch I drove to Iowa City for a family gathering. After playing with Theo, I headed into the back yard and started clearing weeds and grass from the raised beds. [My daughter had just moved into this new home in July, and the back yard had gone several years without any serious gardening effort by the previous owners.] In the process I discovered a small herb bed (lavender, thyme, mint) and a nice patch of columbine. Trimmed a clump of salvia and cut back a spirea so it was no longer covering a boxwood. Patrick had already done some weeding in front, and the basic structure of the yard's perennials is now beginning to emerge. He used an app on his phone to help us make a few plant identifications:

- The tree in the middle of the backyard is a Judas tree, a kind of redbud.
- We confirmed my suspicion that the large tree on the south side of the yard is a basswood.
- As for the contorted tree near the front steps, it is a corkscrew filbert--which I learned this evening was discovered by the 19th-century gardener Canon Ellacombe, one of my favorite garden writers.

9 September. We were in Spring Green the past four days, seeing six plays at the American Players Theatre. The best was Lauren Gunderson's *The Book of Will*, a marvelous production of a marvelous play. In many respects the play and its rendering reminded me of seeing Tom Stoppard's *Arcadia* at the National Theatre in London in 1993. The APT performance worked beautifully on so many levels: acting, staging, message, a magical capturing of a lost time and culture--and the conclusion to the play was exquisite, so emotionally moving. The play is also quite funny. Just a great experience. Other super-good performances included Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, with Marcus T. as Sir Andrew Aguecheck, David Daniel as Malvolio, and Kelsey Brennan as a convincing Viola. The previous night was Wilson's *Fences*, also a first-rate production. The first night was Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer*--an intelligent, well-crafted production but not one that left an indelible impression.

It rained off and on this morning so I used the time to catch up on email and garden web items. I posted one MMGR and wrote the first draft of another. The major task today was installing the two Tom Nelson steelwork sculptures we purchased in Muscoda on Friday. The placement of the crane piece was easy: I just set it in the rain

garden next to Nelson's cattail sculpture. It needs to be stabilized, but it naturally fits into this area. Although it's 7' tall, it's still shorter than the meadow rue, its closest neighbor. As for the big mobile, that required moving the small Nelson mobile that has resided in the "C" bed for a couple years. The new mobile is much larger and fills the space much more effectively. As for the smaller Nelson, I took it to the "H" bed and placed it between the hydrangea and the red twig dogwood. It looks more comfortable in this smaller, contained area.

As for my vegetable gardening, I ordered 5 lbs of garlic from the Garlic Store, including 3 lbs of Majestic, the large, mild, hardneck that did so well for me this year. I also ordered a hardneck that is supposed to have a stronger flavor and more heat. The Majestic is quite mild—which is one reason why I like it.

In the afternoon, I drove to Wickiup, arriving about 3:30. Spent most of my time harvesting—though I did pull weeds out of a new bed of peas. As for produce, I got about 25 cukes. Some vines are dying, but every variety still has a few viable plants. The gold zucchini in the raised bed are finished, but the white are still producing. Perhaps most exciting is that I have four young Asti zucchini started from seed in early August. They already have fruit that will be ready for harvest by the end of this week.

Just for the record, today was our 52nd wedding anniversary. [I remember when MVM's parents celebrated their ruby anniversary. At the time I thought it was a remarkable achievement being married to the same person for forty years. Now that we are twelve years past our ruby hurdle, 40 years seems like just the beginning.]

11 September. Today might prove an important day in the history of the Alumni House Garden, or perhaps it will be just a minor, transient blip. At 11:00 I met with Chad and Melea to discuss the possibility for constructing two labyrinths: a traditionally designed, east-oriented labyrinth that Melea has proposed would be located in an open grassy area east of the Nassif House; my proposal is for an elongated, asymmetrical labyrinth on the south side of the Alumni House. My design would involve removing 3-4 of the hawthorn trees (which no longer thrive because they have fallen into the shadows of the larger maple trees) and create a new perennial flower garden with hostas and shade-friendly companions to border the twisting path. I was thinking of 3' wide paths covered with wood chips, comparable to what we've used at the east end of the garden. My proposal would be simple to install and be quite cheap to install—less than a thousand dollars.

[At a later date there was some conversation about whether it made sense to convince the college to support two labyrinth proposals. I indicated my primary

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concern was to develop an aesthetically pleasing garden area with a reliable “dry” pathway from the parking lot to the SW garden gate. I was not concerned whether it be called a labyrinth or the hosta garden or a meandering path. As it turned out, the labyrinths were never approved.]

Lettuce procureth sleepe, causeth good bloude, helpeth digestion, looseth the belly, causeth plentifulness of milk in the breastes, sharpneth the sight, cooleth impostumes, helpeth the dropsy, cureth the shedding of sperm, procureth sleep being laid under the coverlet, and profiteth Cholericke persons.

Lettuce is noisome unto married men: it dulleth the sight of the eies. It abateth the venerealle acte, it harmeth the fleumaticke, the overmuch eating of Lettuce is as perilous as Hemlocke.

~Didymus Mountain, The Gardener's Labyrinth (1586)

19 September. Yesterday, I stayed home for most of the morning, assembling a vegetable soup, which included these items from the garden:

- One garlic bulb
- Four Walla Walla onions and one anonymous onion planted last year
- Four varieties of sweet peppers: Japanese white, a Goddess, an Ace, and several Felicity peppers (a new favorite)
- Five varieties of beans: Seychelles; yellow wax; Chinese red noodle, red runner, and Jacob's Cattle dry bean.
- Tomatoes (mostly Wapsipinicon Peach)
- Okra
- Swiss Chard
- One beet (my total beet crop at the moment)
- One large parsnip

The only non-garden ingredients were the chicken broth, brown rice, and seasonings. Cooked on low heat for almost six hours (took the dry beans longer to cook than I had expected).

Today my main accomplishment was unpacking and assembling one of the new garden benches for the Coe garden. Although the packaging was beat up, the bench pieces were well-protected and appear to be undamaged. The assembly instructions were reasonably clear, and I had assembled most of the bench before leaving for an Administrative Board church meeting.

21 September. One major accomplishment today: Cara brought the new steel sundial to Coe this morning, and in a few minutes it was set up, positioned on the old base in the same spot where the wooden “beta” model was installed last year. The steel is currently a gray silver with interesting metallic waves on its surface, but it will immediately start oxidizing and soon turn a rusty red. The overcast skies this morning made it impossible to check the accuracy of the sun clock, but the fall equinox is Monday and should enable us to make any adjustments in its position—assuming we have a noon sun.

25 September. Called Cara on the phone and spent almost half of my annual budget on two big sculptures I had seen in her studio: a 6' tall curved piece that I knew would fit in the deep SE corner of the “G” bed and a comparably sized, stainless steel piece with colored plates that should look good near the northeast corner of the patio, where it will add some appreciable color to the garden in the winter.

Today I also had an interesting conversation with two non-Coe women who were walking around the garden. One said she was seeking to become a Master Gardener and was interested in volunteering to help with the garden. I gave her my card and several issues of *The Garden Quarto*. They work at a business on First Ave, so perhaps I’ll see them again.

28 September. Great gardening day, ideal conditions, temp in 60s. This morning I worked at home in the backyard, cleaning out the gooseberry/currant bed and clearing the stepping stone path that runs behind the big maple. Made some observable progress--the first time in months when I felt genuinely engaged in a backyard project. At noon, I wanted to keep going, but I knew I could not put off jobs at Coe and Wickiup.

After lunch I went to Coe and walked over to the football stadium to watch five minutes of the Luther/Coe game. Saw the Kohawks score a touchdown on a long pass, giving them a half-time of 24-3. I walked back to the garden and spent an hour pulling up dandelions, sedge, and other weeds from the lawn. The biggest problem now is the hundreds of tiny violets in the SW section. They are difficult to pull up because of their dense root system.

At Wickiup I discovered a deer had jumped the fence and crashed into a livestock panel that now serves as a trellis for fall peas. The panel, surrounded by deer prints, was seriously bent; however, I didn’t see much evidence that any vegetables or fruit had been eaten, just the tops of a few Peruvian daisies. As for my harvest, I gathered the following:

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- Dug up all the oldest row of carrots.
- Harvested about 4 pints of snap peas and ½ pint of snow peas (which we had for supper with cooked potatoes MVM had prepared a couple days ago).
- Dozen cukes; the vines look terrible but the Jade, SVC hybrid, and the General Lee plants are still producing.
- Picked three eggplants (many more are ready).
- Gathered 15-20 sweet peppers (many more are ready).
- Filled a gallon bucket with Cranberry Vermont beans; the first time I've harvested these beautiful dried beans.

30 September. Summer returned today with heat (temp near 90F) and humidity. I worked for two hours this afternoon in the backyard—cleaning up the raspberry bed—and I was drenched in sweat. The saving grace is that I was in the shade, there was an occasional breeze, and there were few gnats, flies, or mosquitoes.

I began the day by composing an email inviting all faculty and staff to a garden party next Wednesday with Cara as featured guest. At 8:30 Cara arrived at the garden, and we spent the next hour digging three holes in the gravel walkway for the stainless steel colored plate sculpture (Cara's "Rising Sun" piece), filling the holes with cement, and driving stakes into the wet cement to hold the piece in place. No likely any wind will ever blow it over.

After Cara left, I mowed the four lawn sections. The grass was still damp, and many patches of grass needed to be mowed a second time. I continue to be amazed how much the grass has improved in the last month: a thick, dark green carpet with few weeds. It looks far better than I would ever had hoped—particularly when I recall the springtime problems with the coons digging for grubs and all the sedge and crabgrass we have manually removed the last four months. This success may not last, but at the moment I feel darn good about the lawn.

Garden Raddishes are in wantonness by the gentry eaten as a sallad, but they breed but scurvy humours in the stomach, and corrupt the blood, and then send for a physician as fast as you can.

~Nicholas Culpepper, The Compleat Herbal (1653)