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Turn junk into garden treasures

1 2 3

May 17, 2010

KAREN DEER
ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH
(May 17, 2010)

Are you a scavenger? If you are, maybe you'll be lucky enough to find a Radio Flyer wagon stuffed into a trash bin, as we did. It was old, rusty and could barely move. We grabbed it.

If not, you may want to hold on to some of your junk for your garden paths, patios and porches.

With the help of a garden centre, the red wagon was transformed into lavish garden centrepiece, filled with annuals, perennials and herbs.

You can personalize your garden with items scavenged from basements, age sales and flea markets. See what a little fresh paint, new blooms and even strawberries did to these old items.

OLD WOODEN CHAIR

1. Cut out centre so pot can rest on the frame.
2. Spray paint chair and pot.
3. Plant large pot (we used a 12-inch clay pot plus smaller potted plants for the ladder part of the chair) filled with yellow sweet potato vine, red verbena, Tango Neon purple geranium, Calibrachoa Dreamsickle, Supertunia Royal Velvet and premium potting soil.

OLD METAL WATERING CAN

1. Fill the bottom one-third of the can with plastic crumpled containers to improve drainage.
2. Fill the rest of the can with potting soil.
3. For height, plant a white caladium. For fullness, plant a dragon wing begonia and Torenia Blue Wave.
4. To soften the look, plant asparagus fern to drape over the edge.



Photos by John L. White, St. Louis Post-Dispatch

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5. After planting, spread a slow-release fertilizer and then cover the soil with sphagnum moss for a finished look.

OLD MAN'S BOOT

1. Remove the steel toe and shoe tongue.
2. Drill holes through the sole near the ball of the foot and drill one hole in the inside arch through the leather.
3. Plant the small toe hole with spicy mix micro-greens such as cabbage Red Ace, mustard Sawtooth and radish China Rose. Wrap the green tops in a rolled newspaper to prevent them from becoming damaged in the process of threading them through the boot and then into the small hole.
4. Line the back of the shoe and the tongue area with a scrap of coir liner. This liner is typical in hanging baskets. Add potting mix and time-release fertilizer.

5. Plant the boot with *Lavandula stoechas* Blueberry Ruffles, pansy Fizzy Lemonberry and *Nemesia* Violet Ice.

6. Arrange the shoes' strings and water thoroughly.

RED RADIO FLYER WAGON

1. Drill holes in the wagon for drainage. Line with pebbles for additional drainage.
2. Fill wagon 1/2 full to 3/4 full with Miracle Gro potting mix containing Osmocote.
3. Select miniature plants such as miniature conifers, pathway plants, herbs and small flowering perennials and annuals. Add fragrant flowers for bees and butterflies. Plants used: Dwarf Alberta spruce, Common Juniper, Paul's dwarf mugo pine, *Digitalis* Goldcrest, English daisy, *Sedum yunnanense*, sweet Alyssum, Scotch moss, *Ajuga* Chocolate Chip and *Herniaria* Sea Foam.
4. Add accessories including a miniature cottage with a fence and gate, stones to terrace and create paths and coloured glass to create a stream. Other items used: a miniature garden bench, chair, wheelbarrow, flower pot, beehive, birdhouse, bird bath, miniature bees, butterflies, ladybugs, birds, raccoon, a cat, a toad with a toadstool and, of course, fairies.

