

Lamorinda OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 17 Issue 10 Wednesday, July 5, 2023



The Real Estate Quarter in Review ... read on Page D4

Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian Summer blooms brighter

Photos Cynthia Brian



A fan favorite, Asiatic lilies. Daylilies are also great for summer blooms.



A plethora of blooms including lamb's ear, roses, mint, and nigella.

By Cynthia Brian

"I should like to enjoy this summer flower by flower, as if it were to be the last one for me." ~ Andre Gide

Summer is the most beloved season of the year for most people for many reasons. It is a time for vacations, picnics, beach excursions, barbecues, and plenty of outdoor activities. For me, summer is all about the flowers and alfresco living. I finally finished my first round of weeding my landscape, cleaned my deck and patio furniture, re-potted plants, and am in the process of adding additional compost to my

blooming plants.

Compost is an essential ingredient to promote blooming, improve the health of the soil, and increase the vigor of any plant. As a nutrient-rich soil amendment, compost is aptly referred to as "black gold" with its balanced mix of macro and micronutrients including nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, calcium, plus other slow-release nutrients. The organic matter in compost acts like a sponge that retains moisture around plant roots. This retention reduces the stress on plants during hot and dry periods. Teeming with beneficial microorganisms including fungi, bacteria, and earthworms, organic

matter is easily broken down to create a healthy soil ecosystem that suppresses disease, resists pests, and encourages root growth. When I'm planting new specimens, I mix the compost with new soil before planting, and for established plants, like my roses, I use it as a top dressing.

Thankfully, June was cooler than expected which allowed for summer plantings to take root. Because the sun's intensity usually brings soaring temperatures in summer, we must implement specific strategies to grow our gardens in July and August. For vegetables, heat-loving tomatoes, sweet potatoes, eggplant, peppers, and okra can still be planted. ... continued on Page D8