



CITY OF THE DALLES

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PRESS RELEASE

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TOPIC: The Dalles Beautification & Tree Committee Announces July 2026 Beautification Award Winner

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FOR RELEASE: IMMEDIATELY

The Dalles, Oregon – The City of The Dalles Beautification & Tree Committee is pleased to recognize Judy and Ray Smitke as recipients of the July Beautification Award for their outstanding garden at 2311 Radio Way.

What began as a collection of favorite plants and garden treasures has grown into a whimsical and ever-changing landscape that reflects the homeowner's creativity, love of gardening, and appreciation for nature.

The garden combines perennials brought from the homeowner's Portland garden when they moved to The Dalles six years ago with drought-tolerant plants selected for their ability to thrive in the local climate. Through experimentation and a willingness to adapt, plants are moved and rearranged each year based on how well they grow and complement the space.

The garden's unique character is created not only through its diverse plant selections but also through the thoughtful addition of garden ornaments and rocks, which add texture, personality, and a sense of whimsy throughout the landscape.

"I garden by whimsy," said homeowner Judy Smitke. "If I like it, I plant it. If the hummingbirds like it, I plant it. If a plant doesn't grow well or looks good where I put it, I move it the next year."

Looking ahead, the garden will continue to evolve with each season, guided by curiosity, creativity, and whatever inspires the gardener's next idea.

The Beautification Award recognizes residents and businesses that contribute to the appearance and livability of The Dalles through exceptional landscaping, property maintenance, and community pride. The Beautification & Tree Committee congratulates Judy and Ray Smitke on this well-deserved recognition and thanks them for helping make The Dalles a more beautiful place to live.

Photos can be found on the City Hall Facebook page: www.facebook.com/share/p/1FKNJ7JMvk

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