

# Green thumbs: PRIDE sponsors area garden tour

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**GODFREY** - Perfect strangers were invited to meander the homes and gardens of some of Alton and Godfrey's private citizens Saturday afternoon.

They were part of the **28th Annual Garden Tour**, sponsored by **PRIDE, Inc.** For the cost of a \$12 ticket and map, curious garden enthusiasts were able to take peaks at the

gardens of nine households and two public gardens. One of those private citizens was **Tom Hoescht, of CNB Bank and Trust**. Hoescht helped organize the event and put his home on Prospect Street on display.

“What’s kind of unique this year is normally, you have to visit a home and get in your car and drive to the next,” Hoescht said in a previous interview with Riverbender.com. “This year, we have the first three sites at three consecutive addresses, so you’ll be able to park one time and see three homes. Then, you can leave there and go to the Christian Hill area and visit four homes on one block.”

One of the public gardens on display was the **University of Illinois Extension Master Garden**, located behind the Godfrey Village Hall. **Project leader, Nancy Orrill** said each of the dozen members of the gardening team was a certified master gardener. She has been a part of the project since its inception 10 years ago. She said the garden has grown a lot since its creation, largely thanks to local sponsors.



"We just started a native prairie garden," she said. "It isn't much this year, but it will be awesome next year."

The gardens grow annuals, perennials, bulbs, fruits, herbs and vegetables. All of the food grown has been donated to the Crisis Food Center in Alton. Last year, the gardeners donated 1,300lbs of food to that organization.

"That sounds like a lot, but we had more in the past," Orrill said. "There's been times in the past when we gave over 2,000 pounds away."

Those crops are the result from weekly work in the garden. Orrill said she works with the other gardeners every Wednesday morning from 8 a.m. until noon. They are assisted by members from the Alton High School National Honors Society. There is also a small garden created by the Little Knights Daycare.

A shed housing all the tools used in the garden was donated by the Godfrey Women's League and the Village of Godfrey. A list of sponsors is also on the shed, including Green Thumb Nursery, Market Basket and the now defunct Pizza World, formerly on Godfrey Road.

Other gardens featured included the public garden at Lewis and Clark Community College and the private home gardens of John Meehan and Bruce Egelhoff, Robert and Susan Delgado, Ron and Judy Mayhew, Jeff and Karen Kelley, Ed and Patty Morrissey, and Diane Burton.

PRIDE, Inc., which sponsored the event, is a non-profit organization dedicated to the beautification of the Alton and Godfrey Area.



