

Saybrook Point Gardens



JOHN LOMBARDO, just-retired general manager of Saybrook Point Resort & Marina in Old Saybrook, is amazed at how his wife Darci's gardens have changed the character of that establishment and asked if we might like to visit them and perhaps pay her some editorial tribute. Happy to oblige!

In Darci's words, "This is my sixth summer with the gardens. I originally took it upon myself to start planting some flowers here and there around the hotel property. I didn't ask permission and nobody hired me (of course my

husband was general manager so I had his approval!). We had just left our wonderful life in New Jersey and I was looking for distraction from my melancholy and a purpose as I began this new adventure in Connecticut.

That same spring, another couple had moved into our building on the Saybrook Point property. I asked her – Donna – if she'd like to help me with some flowers, and we both jumped right in, neither one of us having had any landscaping experience.

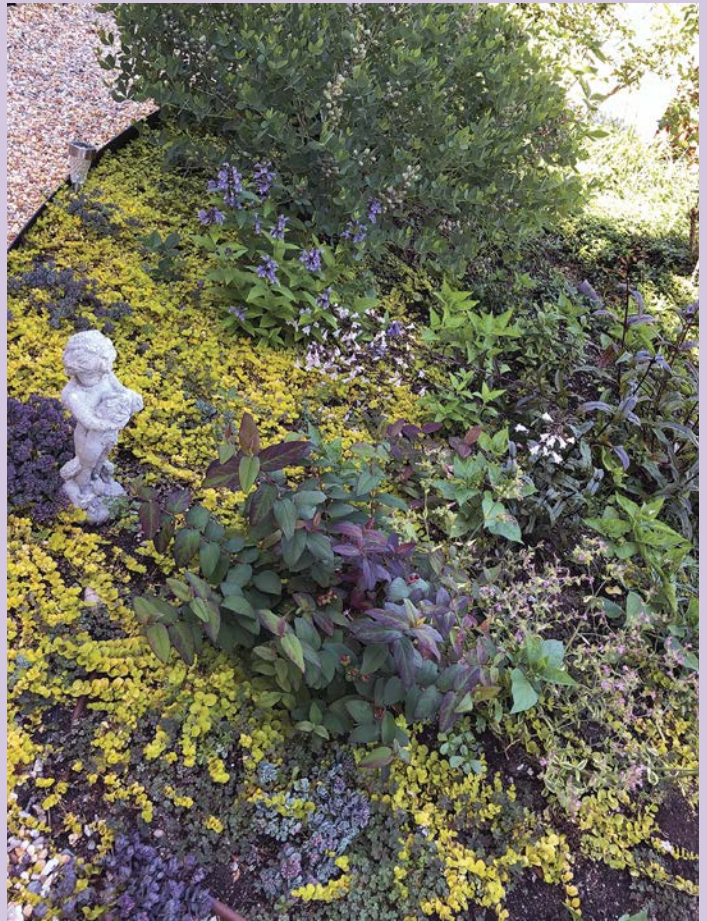
We thought we'd spend a few hours a

week on this 'little project.' If we'd known the little project would turn into such a grand transformation, we would have been defeated before we even began! Once we were on a roll it took on a life of its own and there was no stopping us. And no one did stop us, they just let us design and create.

We kept going summer after summer, pulling out old and putting in new – four years together! Every summer better than the last as, through experience, we became more comfortable and

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Opposite page, bottom left: John & Darci Lombardo; center: Marc Sinvil. Read more about the Saybrook Point gardens story at conngardener.com. We hope you enjoy the beautiful summer scenes here while you overwinter and await the 2023 gardening season. To contact Darci with questions, leave her a message at 860.661.5143



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confident. So many people would ask if they could hire us to do their gardens, and we used to joke that if we had a business card it would say, 'D&D Landscaping. Donna and Darci. Two Girls Who Don't Know What We're Doing.'

Regrettably, Donna moved away in early 2021, so I've carried on in her absence, missing her with every bloom of every flower. Fortunately, Marc Sinvil (I call him the Garden Wizard) started working with us three summers ago





and we make a great team. I love to find plants I like and places to put them and he loves to get them in the ground.

I'm very fortunate to have neighbors and friends – my Garden Fairies – who love to assist from time to time. I'm grateful for their time and talents!"

Darci's been told that, like the accidental tourist, she's the accidental gardener, and that she creates gardens with personality. Mostly self-taught, they employed a gardener in New Jersey and picked up some basics. She feels gardening can be very intimidating and wants to prove that it can be done

successfully by most anyone.

The sea air and sparkling light at the site brings out the best in every plant. The gardens are kaleidoscopic – blooms and color everywhere, whimsy, exuberance and the promise of much more to come. Butterflies, bees, and birds abound (with Darci rather butterfly-like herself, in a pretty skirt flitting from plant to plant, eager to go on to the next). She is so excited to be sharing her gardens with all of us, and they are a joy to behold – thank you, Darci! ❁

– Anne Rowlands

