

# Tour

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There are still more treasures hidden in plain sight.

Hint: The tall blue towers. It looks like yard art. It's really the sprinkler system.

Hear something buzzing?

Hint: The bees are the real thing.

"They don't bother me," Rod said. "I don't bother them. They're happy. I'm happy. I imagine if I grabbed a hold of them they'd send a message."

The level lawn with winding paths is a registered Wildlife Habitat, though no creatures are more wilder than Rod.

The couple moved to Mukilteo in 1999 from Redmond after he retired as a Seattle Fire Department chief.

"It took three and a half hours to mow the lawn," he said. "I said, 'This is the stupidest thing I've ever seen.' So we bulldozed the entire property. We brought in tons of dirt and roto-tilled and roto-tilled so things will grow in here. We put in retaining walls."

Mowing time now: 30 minutes.

He buys a lot of plants on clearance. "I water them, throw them in the ground. Put them in the ground in the right place and they grow

like crazy."

He gets as excited about plants as Willy Wonka in a chocolate factory.

"I try to have something in bloom all year because it makes me happy," he said.

Lorraine has the same enthusiasm about sewing.

"It provides for me a chance to be creative, a chance to be peaceful and a chance to lose yourself in something," she said.

"Quilts are made with love. Every quilt a person has put a bit of themselves in. From the time they pick the fabrics and pattern to stitching it to quilting it to giving it to someone."

She sometimes invites friends over to set up machines on the garden patio. "It's very different sewing outside. You hear all the birds," said Lorraine, who had careers as a respiratory therapist and a ceramic engineer.

After retiring, the couple ran a home-based online fabric store, but now are pursuing their passions full time.

"We are doing the same thing using different mediums. Fabric and gardening are kind of addicting," Lorraine said.

Their 12-year-old grandson, Dominic, recently had a quilt in a show.

"It looks really cool," Dominic said. "It's fun to do and you can make all kinds of different designs and stuff."