



Blooming 'gifts', relationships in courtyard of life

Yuan Yue and Li Xinran

No matter how a city changes and how technology iterates, the Chinese people's love for nature remains unchanged.

Wang Aiqin's home is particularly prominent in Jiading Industrial Zone. The courtyard is surrounded by various flowers and green plants.

The yard has seen plowing and harvesting for five years. Last year, it was for the first time rated as a model courtyard in the suburban district.

Entering the courtyard, all kinds of ornaments and carefully maintained plants reveal Wang's exquisite taste toward life.

Wang's daughter Chen Can was the first in her family to be interested in flowers and plants. She said that after her mother moved here five years ago, she fell in love with decorating the courtyard due to her influence.

"In the process of decorating the courtyard, my mother gradually felt



The heart-shaped tree pruned by Wang

that flowers could make her home more lively," Chen said.

In one corner of the courtyard is a wall of Lady Banks rose, a first attempt by Wang. The sense of accomplishment also began here.

"At first, there was only one small plant, and I didn't expect it to grow all over the wall," she said.

The plant was growing vigorously, and Wang was very happy. The flowers of Lady Banks rose are clean and elegant. They bloom in clusters and have grown into a sea of yellow flowers.

Wang also planted colorful hydrangea blooming on the side.

There is a lot of gardening equipment stored in the yard. With these tools, Wang gets more ideas for decorating the yard.

"This tree in the shape of love was pruned by me," she said proudly. "It was my first try so I did it very slowly."

Wang spends two to three hours in the yard every day, no matter in winter or summer.

Wang Aiqin's garden, full of colorful blossoms and green plants, is awarded Jiading's model courtyard in 2022. — Photos by Yuan Yue

The small yard repaid its owner in its own way. Blueberry, kumquat, osmanthus, hydrangea and rosemary... Every once in a while, Wang can harvest "gifts" from the yard. She also follows tutorials, turning these "gifts" into osmanthus honey and orange honey.

"I am usually busy at work and spend less time with my mother. It is good for her to develop a hobby," Chen explained. Now the mother and daughter have more things in common.

Thanks to the daughter's keen designs and the mother's careful tending, little by little things were added in the yard, accumulating happy memories bit by bit.

By sheer chance, Wang's first attempt, the Lady Banks rose, brought changes in neighborhood relationships.

"We didn't know each other well before, but we became familiar through the flowers," Wang said of her neighbors.

The branches of Lady Banks rose grew into the neighbor's house, who then took care of it, and finally grew into a wall of flowers.

"Now we have a good relationship, and we visit each other more often to share our experiences in decorating the courtyard," said Wang.

Wang's hobby began to sprout in the yard. From harvesting flowers and fruits to making fresh food, and sharing with neighbors and friends, the small yard has gradually become an indispensable part of Wang's retirement life.

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