

DOWNTOWN, SOUTH LOOP &amp; RIVER NORTH Sports &amp; Outdoors

## Dearborn Garden Walk Has Love in the Air

By Tatiana Walk-Morris | July 14, 2015 5:47am

 @tati\_wm


Stephen Gertz, one of the designers featured in last year's garden walk, will also participate in the 2015 Dearborn Garden Walk with his fiancée and fellow interior designer, Janessa Handschiegel.

 Close

Photo Courtesy of Ashley Hamm Photography

GOLD COAST — For Stephen Gertz and his fiancée, Janessa Handschiegel, both local interior designers, creating a vignette for this year's Dearborn Garden Walk has been “literally a labor of love.”

As part of the 57th annual Dearborn Garden Walk, which takes place Sunday along Dearborn Parkway, designers are to construct displays of affection for the 2015 theme — “Love in Bloom: A Garden Wedding.”

The theme, chosen by a vignette committee, tasks designers with arranging furniture, props and florals into wedding-inspired gardens, according to Peg Callard, president of the North Dearborn Association. The proceeds from the walk go toward the association's neighborhood restoration efforts, she said.

“In the 1950s, the area became very decrepit and ... it was really in a downward spiral,” Callard said. “All the residents got together and said ‘We have to do something about this.’ So the garden walk was created not only to raise funds to improve the neighborhood but to get interest in people who weren't in the neighborhood to come.”

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The designers featured in this year's walk will create wedding elements such as the bridal shower or the bachelor party. Designing the garden display has given Gertz, of interior design company Milieu, and Handschiegel, owner of Janessa | James Interiors, inspiration for their own wedding, Gertz said.



Janessa Handschiegel and her fiancée Stephen Gertz will use this glassware for their 2015 Dearborn Garden Walk vignette.

Their display was inspired by Humphrey Bogart's and Lauren Bacall's love story. To evoke Hollywood glamor and pay tribute to that era, Handschiegel said they're using vintage furniture, gold and ivory accents, textiles, a wedding dress and flowers from [Marguerite Gardens](#) in Chicago for their display.

"We created a space where we imagined Lauren Bacall getting ready before meeting the man of her dreams at the altar," Handschiegel said.

Other neighborhood garden walks are cropping up in Chicago this summer, but the Dearborn Garden Walk is more leisurely and intimate, Callard said, adding that gardeners come to learn about exotic plants and fertilizer methods.

New to this year's garden walk are two gardening seminars for shade and container gardening at St. Paul's Evangelical, 1301 N. LaSalle St., and the patios at 1364 N. State St. Attendees will learn about growing varieties of plants through shade growing and gardening in small spaces such as decks, patios and porches.

"Years ago the Dearborn Garden Walk did offer entertainment ... but it became too much of a hurdle to do that kind of thing. That's why we simplified it to what it is today," she said. "This one is just an easy-going, beautiful walk to experience."

Tickets are available at the Latin Middle School in advance for \$30 until Saturday and will be available the day of the event for \$35.

<http://www.dnainfo.com/chicago/20150714/gold-coast/dearborn-garden-walk-has-love-air>