



# The Water Garden

Volume 19 Number 4

July 2002

July 14, starts at 10 a.m.

## 2002 Pond Tour - Complete Information in Center Section

Our 2002 Pond Tour will take us through south and west Denver.

Craig Russell, Pond Tour Chairman, has spent a great deal of time putting together another spectacular tour for all of us to enjoy.

A total of eight ponds are on the route, varying from formal to informal and

small to large. Each was designed and created by their owners.

The picnic this year will be at the last pond on the tour, the home of John and Mary Mirgon, founders of CWGS. We will start the picnic at 1:30 P.M., food and drink are provided for a nominal fee. More information is in the center section,

with full details on ponds and driving instructions, complete with maps.

Many thanks to those who have so graciously allowed us into their yards. A special "thank you" to Craig for his time arranging the tour and Carla Littlefield for arranging for the picnic lunch.

## Water plants are an integral part of Asian Culture

by Cyndie Thomas

A trip to an Asian market, based on a "hot tip" that cheap water plants could be found, instead became an enlightening learning opportunity about the Asian culture, a growing segment of our Denver population. A number of plants to grow, were found, too!

I didn't embark on the adventure alone; Mary Mirgon accompanied me to help identify the "raw elements" that might grow into plants for the water garden.

We were both surprised to see the numerous foods and drinks derived from water plants each of us had grown at one time or another. Canned Pennywort Drink was a discovery that left us guessing at the possible taste sensation. A jar of spicy, pickled vegetables included both Chinese water chestnut and lotus root.

The produce section was filled with many unfamiliar fruits, vegetables and herbs. Signage was all in Vietnamese, making it a guessing game. Careful examination of items provided a few clues to the identity of the plant -the shape of a leaf, type of stem (square, solid, hollow) and rubbing the leaf between the fingers to obtain a whiff of its aroma all provided some help. Herb cuttings were scrutinized to see if they could be grown. Each was checked for roots along the stem at leaf nodes. Several plants were selected based on this criteria.

(continued on page 3)



Above: Mary Mirgon checks out the canned drink offerings. Selections included lemon grass tea, gauva and pennywort.



Lotus root in a pickled veggie mix, with hot seasonings. Vietnamese: cu sen



Pennywort Drink, high in iron, tastes like a slightly soured tea. Vietnamese: rau má

## Officers and Committee Chairs for 2002



Cyndie Thomas  
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#### **CWGS June Plant Sale**

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#### **July Pond Tour & Picnic**

Craig Russell 303 443-7877

#### **Newsletter Editor**

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Kudos go out to the students of Aikido Nippon-Kan in Denver who assisted the Thomas' with planting at City Park on Hands Across America Day, June 15. CWGS was fortunate that these volunteers were willing to assist in our project. Center in the photo is Ida, City Park Horticulturist.

Don't forget there are numerous volunteer activities available through CWGS. A primary purpose of the organization is to provide support and education on water gardening through a number of projects and activities.

We do not charge high membership fees to pay for work to be done in our name.

If you enjoy our programs, the sale, our annual pond tour, the display at DBG, then think about ALL the organization and effort that is behind the scenes to have these activities happen for your benefit. If every member were to volunteer just two hours a year, this would lighten the load on the few that spend innumerable hours to benefit everyone.

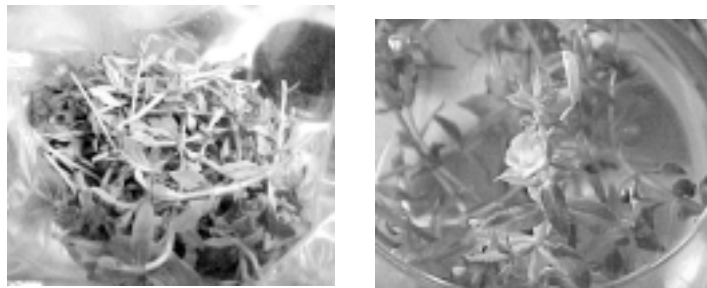
It IS your organization!

# Asian Market - an experience in Water Gardening

(continued from front page)



Water Chestnut (*Eleocharis dulcis*) Vietnamese: ma thay  
A crunchy vegetable (corm) with a coconut-like flavor. It retains its crunchiness even after prolonged cooking. Used in soups, salads and stir fry.



Rice paddy herb (*Limnophila aromatica*) Vietnamese: ngo om  
Vietnamese and Thai cooks use this herb in soups and curry dishes. Good seasoning for fresh fish.



Taro (*Colocasia esculenta*)  
Vietnamese: khoai môn, khoai so  
Cook with sugar as desert, serve cold or hot; or add taro into 'hotpot' with other vegetables, meat and seafood. Skin of rhizome can be irritating to skin.



Lemon Grass (*Cymbopogon citratus*) Vietnamese: xa  
Chop & use them to flavor chicken or fish stock-based soups, can also used in salad dressings and to make a fragrant cup of tea.

The expense to purchase the items was minimal. Taro was \$2 per pound, which average about 15 rhizomes. The Water Chestnuts were a little more expensive, \$3 per pound. The Water Chestnuts are available only seasonally, in our very early spring. All the herbs were packaged in small quantities and averaged \$1.50 per bag.

To grow, herb cuttings were put in water and placed in a bright location near a window. They were totally submerged for rooting. Rhizomes and corms were placed in water not quite covering their tops. These were also placed in bright light.

Cuttings showed root growth within a week. It took more than two weeks for roots to appear on the Taro and Water Chestnut. Water had to be changed daily on these two items to eliminate bacteria and to keep them from rotting. When plants showed good top growth and a healthy root, they were potted and set in water to continue growth.

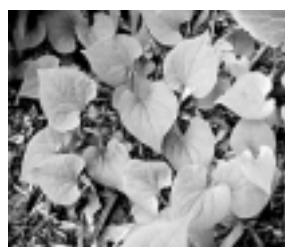
The Rice paddy herb was an exciting new discovery. It has a dainty purple flower with a yellowish center that appears all along the stem from where each leaf is attached. It grows partially submerged with emergent stems.

Lemon grass is one of the most versatile plants; it will grow in a moist environment or in water. It provides a nice center focal point for a container garden.

Probably the most exciting thing about the whole adventure was not the cheap cost of plants, but rather the knowledge that throughout the garden there are plants to munch on while you work.



Vietnamese mint = Water pepper = Vietnamese Coriander (*Polygonum odoratum*)  
Vietnamese: rau ram  
Herb used as a garnish. It has a strong, minty, peppery flavor.



Fishwort and Heartleaf (*Hottuynia cordata*) Vietnamese: Vap ca, Giap ca  
Diep ca  
Leaves of the chameleon plant are sometimes found in Vietnamese salads and garnishes.

# Colorado Water Garden Society Meeting Dates 2002

\* **July 14, 2002 10 AM** Pond Tour and Picnic  
Central Denver

**August 11, 2002 2 PM** Anita Nelson, Nelson Water Gardens of Katy, Texas  
Denver Botanic Gardens, Gates Hall, 9th & York

**September 8, 2002** Water Gardening and Pond Expo  
Denver Botanic Gardens, Mitchel Hall, 9th & York St.

**December 7, 2002** Annual Holiday Party & Volunteer Awards  
Denver Botanic Gardens, Gates Hall, 9th & York St.

Board Meetings are held at beginning two hours prior to general meetings and are open to the public.



*5110 S. ESTES ST  
LITTLETON, CO 80123*

First Class Mail

# 2002 CWGS POND TOUR

Craig Russell, Chairman

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Welcome to the 2002 CWGS Pond Tour, which covers ponds near the University of Denver and north off Colorado Boulevard and west on Alameda. Once again we offer a variety of styles and approaches to enhance your yard and home. Visiting times are from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Sunday July 14, 2001. The time is shortened this year to allow for an earlier start of the picnic. Only the ponds and gardens are open, not the homes (including the restrooms). The picnic will begin at 1:30 p.m. at the home of John and Mary Mirgon, our last stop on the tour.

Although there is shade and tables please be prepared for a hot afternoon in the sun. Bring sun hats, sunscreen, chairs and blankets. CWGS will be providing the picnic lunch with a choice of Bennett's Barbecue brisket sandwiches or Boston Market chicken. Salad, baked beans, chips, desert and drinks will be included.

The charge is \$5.00 each for CWGS members to help defray the costs, children under 6 are free; guests are \$6.00. Door prizes will be given. Please wear your name tag (if you do not have a name tag, a temporary tag may be made at your first stop) and help us welcome new members.

## Pond Previews

- 1 . Pam Maxwell  
1655 S. Humboldt St., Denver

Pam has a 250 gallon pond situated in the front yard of this house built by her father (a brick mason) in 1949. Pam was a member of the CWGS for two years before digging the pond with her son in 1997. The bio filter is powered by a Beckett 1250 submerged on the west side of the pond which also supplies water to the water fall. Pam describes her yard as "her little piece of heaven" and she wants you to enjoy the pond and her surrounding yard which compliments the natural theme of her pond.

- 2 . Gabriella Bertlemann  
2685 S. Lafayette, Denver

This yard has two ponds. The first was hand dug in 1999 and is 14' by 6' and is home to many lillies, goldfish and koi. The second was added in 2001. It is 7' in diameter and raised with a waterfall. This pond has been itegrated into the owners' herb garden and potagere, with fruit trees.

- 3 . Terry Anthun  
2465 S. Garfield, Denver

This water garden is a good example of what you can do with a little imagination. The first pond was built in 1997 through Terry's personal efforts (although she did have some help with the digging). Her first water garden is  
(continued next page)

other garden plants and ideas). A Tetra biological filter and UV sterilizer keep the water clear and the Koi healthy. Terry recently added a second pond of approximately 500 gallons that is , in her words, “is still evolving”.

**2. Ken Lange**  
**100 Glencoe St., Denver**

Ken put this 800 gallon pond in approximately 4 years ago. At the time he was trying to decide how to fill in the lower part of his yard and “discovered” this hole. Rather than fill in the hole he decided to try a pond. What a welcome to “ponding!” After attending a CWGS seminar he designed his own filter system which he incorporated into a waterfall and stream. Ken has numerous lillies and marginal plants and the pond is situated among pine trees and other garden plants.

**5. Bill Powell & Bruce Polkowsky**  
**1210 Clayton St., Denver**

This is a 1200 gallon pond, although it does not appear that large. It is now in its second full year of operation in a small center city backyard. It is a rectangle shape with an architectural concrete edging but uses a flexible liner. The water feature includes a “flume” instead of a traditional stream which appears to be filled by a stone fountain. This is a good example of a little imagination producing a small solution for a small lot.

**6. Maurice “Moe” Belisle**  
**971 S. York St., Denver**

Moe has obviously had other gardening interests in the past and incorporated his small pond into a backyard full of other gardens and plants. The pond is situated against a tree and provides the focal point for the yard. Moe also uses containers along the west fence for other water plants. Do not be surprised by the size of this pond, it shows that water gardening can be done well in a small space.

**7. Trina Jacobson & Les Petrash**  
**670 S. Race St., Denver**

This water garden consists of two ponds connected by a waterfall. The very small back yard is covered with a patio and deck and a boardwalk bordering the pond on two sides. The waterfall is created by using plexiglass on the corner of the upper pond. A unique approach and a very attractive concept where rocks are not used to form the pond.

**8. John and Mary Mirgon**  
**528 Alcott St., Denver**

This site hosts the largest pond on the tour which was built by John for the International conference. A second pond is used for the tropical lillies that John winters overs and raises. Other small preformed ponds are Mary’s “play areas.” John and Mary have a wide variety of hardy and tropical lillies and between Mary and John you will be entertained with a vast knowledge of these and other water plants. They have plants that most of us have not seen can regale you with stories about the people in water gardening they know that have given them plants to try to raise in Colorado. Since this is the site of our picnic you should have a good opportunity to learn about these plants and what John and Mary have meant to water gardening in Colorado and around the world.

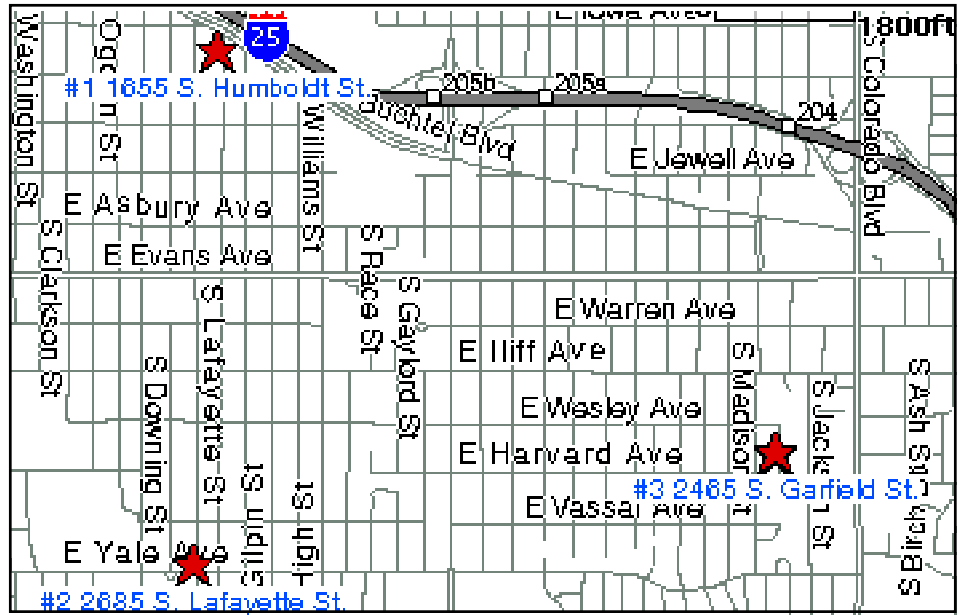
The Mirgons have kindly agreed to have the picnic in their yard. However, there is not a lot of space to sit so it would be wise to bring your own chairs so you can eat in comfort. There are flat areas in the yard for spreading blankets but space will be at a premium. So share that blanket.

## Driving Instructions

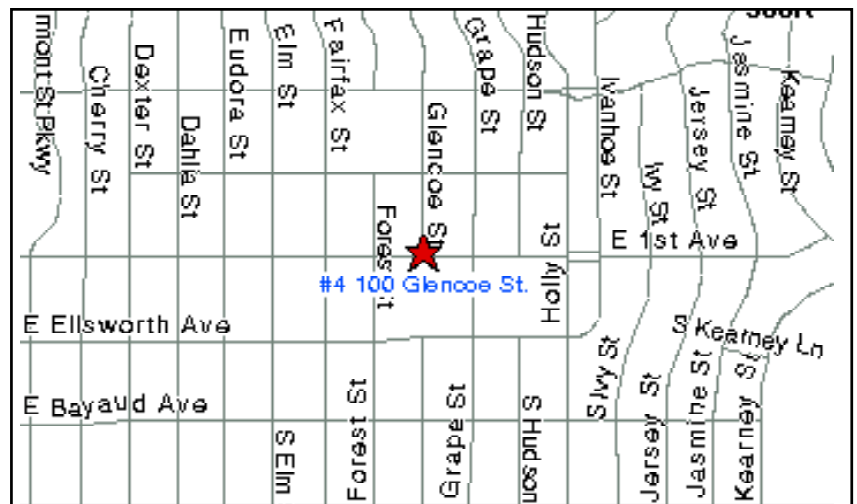
**1<sup>st</sup> pond.** 1655 Humboldt is just off Buchtel Boulevard three blocks east of Downing Street.. However, due to the construction on Buchtel it is easiest to take Downing to Mexico and go east three blocks and turn north on Humboldt. The house will be on the west side of the street.

**2<sup>nd</sup> pond.** Return to Downing at Mexico and proceed south on Downing to E. Yale Street. Turn left or east and go two blocks to S. Lafayette Street. Turn left and 2685 is on the west or left side of the street.

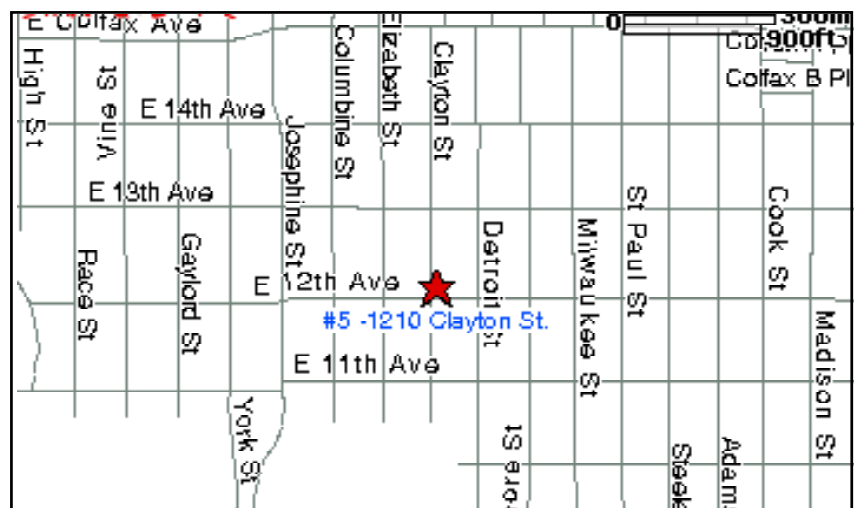
**3<sup>rd</sup> pond.** Return to E. Yale St. and proceed left or east to S. Monroe (about 11 streets past University) and turn left or north on S. Monroe. Go three blocks to E. Harvard and turn right on E. Harvard. You will dead end on Garfield. Turn left and 2465 is on the west or left side of the street.



**4<sup>th</sup> pond.** Return to E. Yale and go east or left to Colorado Boulevard. Turn left or north on Colorado Boulevard and proceed past Alameda to 1<sup>st</sup> Ave. Turn right or east on 1<sup>st</sup> Ave and go 12 blocks to Glencoe. 100 Glencoe is on the north east corner. Park on 1<sup>st</sup> Ave. and enter the garden from the driveway.



**5<sup>th</sup> pond.** Return to Colorado Boulevard and turn north or right. Proceed to E. 12<sup>th</sup> Ave. Turn left or west and go 13 blocks to Clayton St. Turn left or south and 1210 is the second house from the end of the block on the left or east side of the street.







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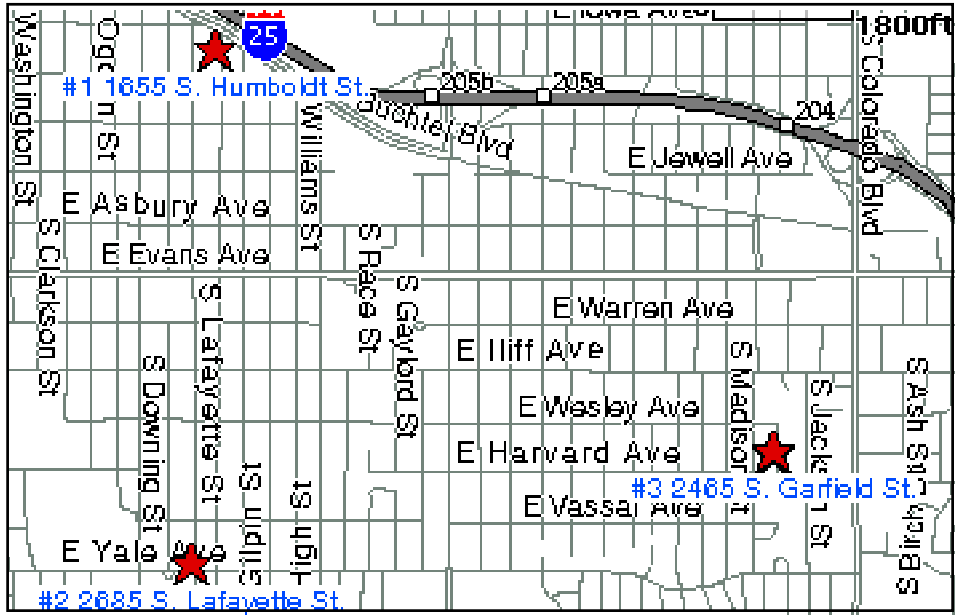
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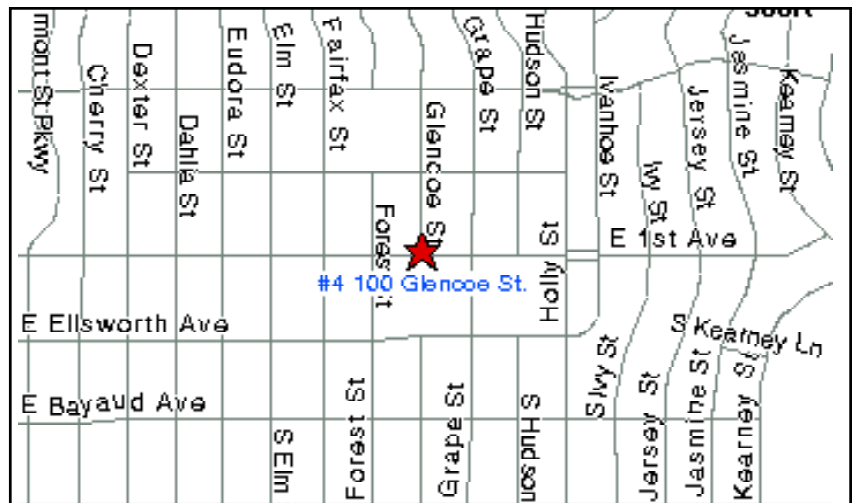
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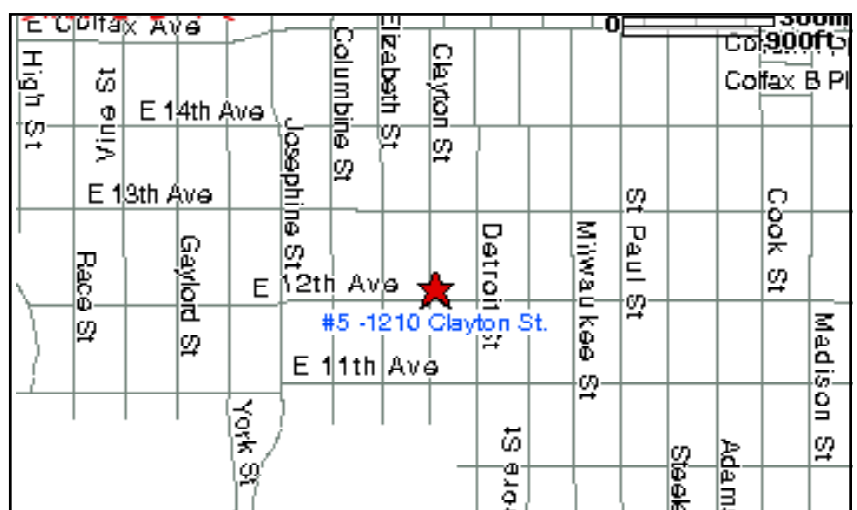
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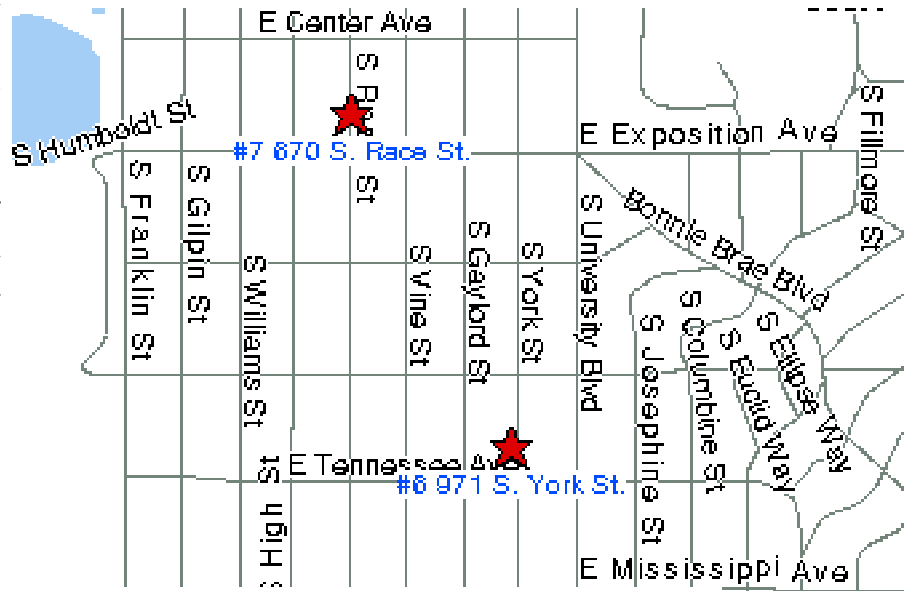
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**6<sup>th</sup> pond.** Turn right or west on E. 12<sup>th</sup> Ave. and go four blocks to York St. Turn left or south and follow York until it turns into University. Proceed on University until E. Tennessee Ave. (3 blocks after Exposition). Turn right or west on E. Tennessee and go one block to S. York St. Turn right or north and 971 is the fifth house on the left side



**7<sup>th</sup> pond.** Proceed north on S. York St. to E. Exposition Ave. (about three blocks). Turn left or west and go three blocks to S. Race St. Turn right or north and 670 is the fourth house on the right side.

**8<sup>th</sup> pond.** (Mirgon's) Return to E. Exposition Ave. and turn left or east. Proceed to University and turn left or north and go four blocks to Alameda. Turn left or west on Alameda and go approximately 3 miles to S. Alcott St. (the first street after the light at Zuni). Turn left or south and go about two and one-half blocks. 528 S. Alcott is on the left or east side of the street. There is a water garden flag on the garage.

