

In large part, they do it on their own.

They are — when you get right down to it — flower growers, after all. And they often want to impart their own views of the natural world onto this very special day.

Take the flowers conjured up by Jennifer Loyet, for instance. She and her family are throwing a November wedding for herself and fiancé, Jeremy Schamber.

And for the event, she's planted more than a dozen large, stonelike containers full of fall foliage and flowers.

"I wanted to do something a little different," says Loyet, who manages the family-owned Greenscape Gardens nursery in Manchester and also is about to get her horticulture degree at St. Louis Community College at Meramec.

Among her containers are two huge urns filled to overflowing with jumbo lavender-colored mums.

There also are other assorted lightweight resin pots packed with autumn-hued annuals and perennials. Big, round leaves of an ornamental mustard (*Brassica*) are dark green now but will turn purple, Loyet says, as the weather cools. They mix with extra-large blooms of *Colossus* pansies, colorful stems of 'Bright Lights' Swiss chard, trailing terra-cotta-colored 'Million Bells' (*Calibrachoa*), tall spikes of the burgundy-hued *Festival Grass* (*Cordyline*) and shorter stems of the plume-topped grass 'Red Riding Hood' (*Pennisetum setaceum*).

Right now, all are living in a white gazebo on the nursery grounds.

"I'm going to keep them outside as long as I can," Loyet says of the mostly cold-hardy plantings, many of them from a plant-promotion program called Proven Winners Fall Magic. "Most of the plants can handle 20 degrees," she adds, "if I keep them under here."

But eventually they will go to the church and reception.

Loyet has a bright idea for this, too.

Besides using lightweight pots, she fills the bottom half of each with nearly weightless packing peanuts or "crushed soda cans," for ease of moving containers from site to site.

As for the bridal bouquet, she says, "I'll be carrying flowers from a florist.

"It's kind of funny. I do a cut-flower talk for the Missouri Botanical Garden. But that's not



ABOVE: When garden designer Hilary Daniel got married last month, she let a florist put together her choice of bouquet in two-tone lavender lisianthus and spray roses. **RIGHT:** Daniel chose real red roses for her cake. Wiley Price

something that I'll have to worry about at the last minute. I have enough else going on."

Hilary Daniel, owner of the Shrewsbury-based company called Gardens by Hilary, went the florist direction, too, for a wedding bouquet last month of two-tone lavender lisianthus, pale-pink roses, carnations, alstroemeria and stock.

"It resulted in a lovely subdued fragrance," she says, and the easy-to-find flowers "kept the cost down."

Daniel, instead, put all of her energies into horticultural touches for a wedding garden party.

She staged it at night in a client's backyard. And she carefully pruned a crab apple "so no one smacked their head" on low branches. She lighted all the trees with flower-shaped light bulbs and tables with citronella candles. She cleaned flower beds, planted new variegated perennials — hydrangeas and hostas — "to brighten things up for maximum foliage



color at night" and strategically planted annuals in pots.

"My dress had flowers on it; the invitations had subtle flowers embossed on them. Sachets of dried lavender were hand-stuffed by me, and I chose a wine called 'Bloom.'"

On top of all this, the bridal bouquets were all hand-tied. "I was very specific that I wanted the stems to show at the bottom to emphasize the garden theme," says Daniel, who married Steven Engelhardt on that summer evening.

You couldn't get away from gardens, even if you'd wanted to,



TOP AND ABOVE: When Scott Woodbury, a horticulturist at Shaw Nature Reserve, married Abigail Lambert, they went to a Shaw daffodil field for photos and received more than 50 different types of daffodils from a grower/friend who helped Woodbury fashion his bride's bouquet. Kathie Belfield

at the spring wedding of horticulturist Scott Woodbury and his bride, Abigail Lambert.

The event was held at his workplace, Shaw Nature Reserve in Gray Summit. It was early last spring, just when the first batch of thousands of daffodils unfurled trumpetlike blossoms.

And so daffodils became the theme for everything — for a bouquet that the bride carried, for dozens of reception-table centerpieces and as field back-grounds for wedding photos.

Larry Lowman, a friend and daffodil expert, "brought 50 different varieties of daffodils from Arkansas," Woodbury says. But the couple grew their own pansies and miniature marigolds from seed. Pansy blossoms decorated a series of cakes, and displays of potted marigolds drew the crowd into a tent for the reception.

"None were native," Woodbury says of his flowers. He's

known as a native-plant enthusiast. "But right after the ceremony, we planted a prairie with seed."

Guests took bags of native-plant seed to "a half-acre site," he says, and sowed a prairie in lieu of throwing rice. It wasn't exactly meant as a rice substitute, he says, "but a lot of people threw it at us."

"It was a blast and perhaps the main thing that people have remembered about our wedding. The throwing of the prairie seeds is what they've been commenting back to us."

For Woodbury, another horticultural touch may be most memorable. Lowman, the daffodil grower, chose just the right cultivars for the bride's bouquet.

"He and I tied it together for Abigail," Woodbury says. "It was so touching."