

# Ellwood City Ledger

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## **New Ledger series to share local gardener's passion and pointers**

By: Marcia Cater, Ledger Correspondent

An Ellwood City man really digs container gardening, and he's willing to share his expertise with budding gardeners.

Rafael Sciullo is putting together a six-part series on "The Container and Its Magic," which will appear in The Ledger on Wednesdays, beginning May 4.

Sciullo defines container gardening as, "Taking anything that can hold a series of plants and putting them together to create a piece of art."

He said he has nearly 60 containers of organic artistry in his own half-acre yard. His creative combinations of vegetables, herbs, houseplants, flowers, perennials and evergreens often draw in passers-by.

"When you've created a container that people appreciate and you appreciate, it's a good feeling," he said.

When Sciullo was about 10, his grandfather planted the seeds in him that blossomed into a passion that now touches all facets of his life.

One of Sciullo's living masterpieces was named a finalist in "Fine Gardening" magazine's national Container Challenge contest in 2007, he said. He recently received word that a photograph of one of his creations will appear in the magazine's "Container Gardening" publication, due on newsstands in the next few weeks.

He speaks regularly at garden clubs and last month addressed the annual meeting of the Garden Federation of Western Pennsylvania, which represents clubs from throughout the Pittsburgh area.

**Sciullo is president and chief operating officer of Family Hospice and the Center for Compassionate Care in Pittsburgh**, where he also found a way to put his green thumb to use. He created several container gardens on the premises to help patients find serenity.

"I feel very strongly that when people are facing that point in life, it's very important to feel close to nature," he said. "It has a very soothing quality."

Sciullo even found a way to incorporate his love of gardening into his membership in the Ellwood City Historical Society. His yard has been featured twice in the society's Garden Tour, which spotlights four or five local sites.

The roots of Sciullo's hobby also extend deep into his role on Ellwood City Revitalization's board of directors.

"The more that we beautify our surroundings, the more pride we show in the city we live in," he said.