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Contributed by Janet Mackey

## GETTING HOOKED ON GARDENING!

What a wondrous thing it is when a non-gardening friend first gets bitten by the “gardening bug!” The plant that won over my neighbor was a Moonflower (*Ipomoea alba*).



Moonflowers *do* produce amazing flowers, but I didn’t realize how magical they could be. My neighbor had been clear that she wasn’t interested in “growing” plants. She had a few favorite flowers that went into specific places each spring. Once they were planted, she was happy that they required no attention.

Then she saw my Moonflower blossoming. The vine puts on a spellbinding show at sunset when a beautiful green-and-white spiraled bud that looks to be made of meringue transforms into a 5-inch pure white saucer right before your eyes in just over a minute.

Last summer, my neighbor told me she came over and sat on our patio when we were away on vacation (... remember when we used to go away?) and watched the flowers open in the evening.

This year I gave my neighbor a few seedlings when I grew seedlings of my own. She has created beautiful trellises for hers AND she was proud to announce that she had SEVEN blossoms on a single vine one recent evening. I’ve never had more than five.

I am delighted my friend has learned to love watching a plant grow! It does my little gardening-heart good.

p.s. I recently received a text from another friend who also was growing a Moonflower vine from a seedling that I gave her this summer. Her text included a picture of her vine with 2 blossoms and a simple message. “Twins!”

