

## PERCEPTIONS IN LANDSCAPE

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### Interlocking Concrete Pavements

The use of concrete pavers (individual paving units manufactured in a controlled environment from high strength concrete) is growing rapidly across the United States in both residential and commercial applications. Not to be confused with a brick paver, which is a hard fired clay product baked in an oven to produce their durability, a concrete paver contains the same materials used in slab concrete, but in different proportions and added coloring. The pavers then go through a curing process to increase their strength. Quality concrete pavers, or 'modular paving units', are manufactured to minimum standards given by the American Society of Testing Materials. These standards require a minimum compressive strength of 8000 pounds per square inch, less than 5 percent absorption, and resistance to at least 50 freeze-thaw cycles with no more than 1% loss of materials.

In addition to the technical advantages of modular concrete pavings, some of their other advantages are:

**Durability.** Small, individual units interlocking with one another are tolerant of horizontal and vertical movement of supportive soils. Sub-surface heaving and subsidence is easily repaired with little or no loss of modular concrete materials.

#### **Practicality and Economy.**

Concrete paver systems are durable and flexible. Modular concrete structures installed over any utilities or services can be disassembled and reinstalled after repairs with no visual sign of access.

Interlocking concrete pavers are being utilized in many applications. They can be seen in walkways, patios, driveways, pool decks, streets and cross walks, and airport runways to name a few. In Europe there are 100 square feet of pavers installed per person annually, in the United States it is only 1 square foot per person.

The numerous visual qualities of concrete pavers make them appropriate for practically any design project. Pavers come in a variety of colors, styles and textures and can be laid in an endless variety of patterns to create a design unique to each project. For more information on concrete pavers log on to [www.concretenetwork.com](http://www.concretenetwork.com).

#### **Employee Profile – Peter**

**Jarret** has been with Biafore's Landscaping for the last two years. Pete can be seen performing many duties in the field of landscape installation.

His main responsibilities at this time are grading and excavation, wall and paver installation, and stone and pond construction. He also has experience in carpentry and woodworking.

Pete is certified by the International Concrete Paver Institute as a Certified Paver Installer.

On the weekends, Pete maintains his own 35 acre farm in Tyler County

*In one year, the average tree absorbs 26 pounds of carbon dioxide and replaces it with oxygen.*

# West Virginia Botanic Garden

## Tibbs Run Reservoir

Morgantown, WV

*“The West Virginia Botanic Garden, in harmony with nature, seeks to enhance the quality of life through public enjoyment and education involving inspirational landscapes and displays of a rich variety of ornamental plants appropriate to the region.”*

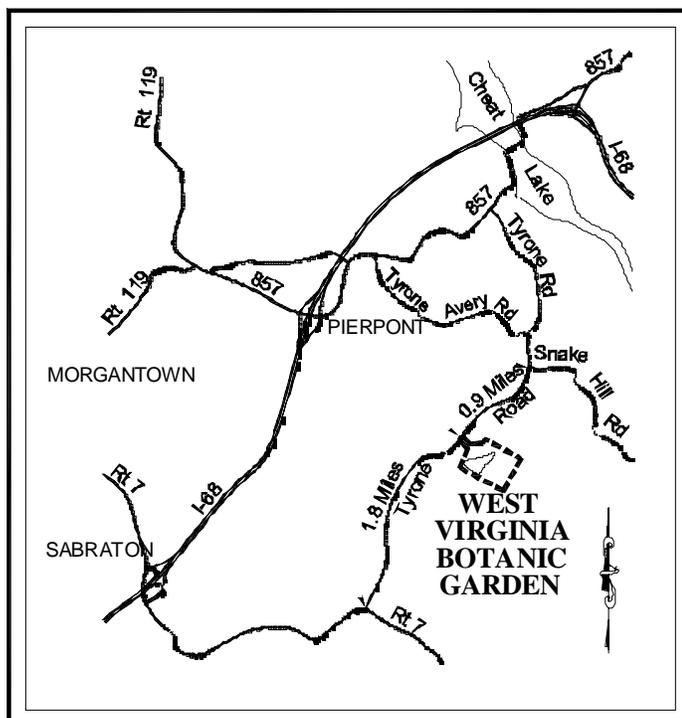
The West Virginia Botanic Garden has been granted a lease by the City of Morgantown for the 82-acre Tibbs Run Reservoir Property off Tyrone Road in eastern Monongalia County. The 15 acre reservoir is empty, and the City has not used it as a water source for many years. A long-range Master Plan for development is emerging. The goal is to develop a horticultural facility that local residents and visitors to the region can enjoy. It will feature plants appropriate to the climate and soils of this region displayed in designed and natural settings, so people may get enjoyment and inspiration and ideas for their own gardens. Two small pools with islands and interesting shorelines will be constructed within the former reservoir basin to allow for the display of aquatic plants. Old water works structures still present will be identified and explained by interpretive signs. An amphitheater for programs and events, a visitor center with meeting rooms, home demonstration gardens, and wheel chair accessible trails are all being planned.

Most of the land is wooded and not touched by the recent timbering. There is a variety of plant species featured on the site with much of the woodland remaining undisturbed. Clean-up is under way to remove brush left from the limited tree cutting by the Morgantown Utility Board prior to WVBG receiving control of the land. This work was done to remove some hazardous dead timber and to open sunny meadow areas. The garden is

open to the public during the ongoing development. Access is limited for the time being to those who can hike down into the area of the reservoir basin from the temporary parking lot beside Tyrone Road. An improved access road is planned for the near future.

There are several ways to become involved with or support the WVBC. Volunteers are able to assist with all aspects of the botanic garden. Site projects, public relations, event organization, fund raising, educational projects and workshops and administrative assistance are to name a few. Donations of any amount are gratefully welcomed. Friends of the Botanic Garden will be eligible for a variety of benefits which include special events, workshops, and educational programs.

WVU Landscape Architecture Professor George Longenecker is the Garden's President and Executive Director. He can be reached for more information at PMB #121, 714 Venture Drive, Morgantown, WV 26508-7308, or at 304-594-1069 and e-mail at [clifside@westco.net](mailto:clifside@westco.net).



*‘If you want flowers, you must water the seeds’ – Honore De Balzac*

# Project Profile

## Fitch Residence

Morgantown, WV

The 1997 renovation of the home of Mark and Kandy Fitch by Smola Construction included the addition of a second story, a garage addition, and a new front porch and family room addition. With this extensive alteration of the interior and exterior of the residence, the yard and garden areas were severely impacted. Biafore's Landscaping was asked to develop a landscape plan that would address functional issues such as grading, pedestrian and vehicular circulation, and aesthetic issues. A small retaining wall was designed to level the grade directly in front of the main entry and create a level outdoor foyer. The front walk and backyard walkway and patio were laid with a tan and gray colored concrete paver to echo the stone veneer of the house. The same paver was used to border the concrete driveway to provide a visual link to the walkways.

Plantings at the Fitch residence consist of a mix of trees, shrubs, perennials and ornamental grasses. The main attraction is a grouping of three Heritage River Birch (*Betula nigra* 'Heritage') on the left front corner of the home underplanted with a mass of Japanese Spurge (*Pachysandra terminalis*). Since the backyard borders Cheat Lake where the family spends many summer days, the plantings in this area were designed to have a major impact during that season. A mix of perennials and ornamental grasses that include Maiden Grass (*Miscanthus sinensis*), Feather Reed Grass (*Calamagrostis acutifolia*), Blackeye Susan (*Rudbeckia fulgida* 'Goldsturm'), Purple and White Coneflower (*Echinacea*), Gayfeather (*Liatris spicata*) and several others border the top of the slope leading to the lake.

That plantings and turf are kept fresh via an automatic irrigation system and the front landscape is illuminated at night with a low voltage landscape lighting system.

## Outdoor Containers

By Mitch Mason of Hauge's Garden Center

As summer approaches and entertaining moves outdoors, homeowners consider decorating their outdoor living rooms with eye catching accents of color. Container gardening has come a long way from the tractor tire filled with geraniums. The choices of both plant material and containers are nearly infinite.



Containers now come in a wide variety of materials. With each material comes a different expectation. We will begin with the most economical container and move to the costliest. First is the plastic pot. The advent of roto-casting combined with the variety of available colors and textures make the 'plain old' plastic pot no longer plain. It is still low cost, light weight, non-porous and thaw resistant. The primary disadvantage of the plastic container is that with long term sunlight exposure it will become brittle. The second problem is that they are, well...plastic.

Terra cotta containers are probably the oldest type of pot. They are beautiful and naturalize well with their surroundings. Even though terra cotta is relatively inexpensive it has character and comes in a wide variety of shapes and forms. Mexican terra cotta has great character but is very fragile, quite heavy, and MUST be stored indoors during the winter. American/German is cheaper in price and more durable than Mexican, but limited in style and form. Italian terra cotta comes in a wide variety of styles and shows good freeze-thaw resistance. It is porous and in time will flake. Relatively new to the scene is glazed ceramic. Thai, Malaysian, and Vietnamese glazed pots have a lot going for them. They are very durable and come in a variety of colors. They are also very freeze-thaw resistant; however they are probably the most costly of the lot.

Concrete pots continue to fade in and out of fashion. Concrete can be very durable, but quality varies with the manufacturer. These containers are best covered for the winter and painted or dyed concrete will need painted every seven to ten years. Cast Iron, or America's answer to bronze will last about three hundred years, but the styles are limited. Cast Iron also gives the biggest bang for the buck. And finally, bronze lasts forever. In 1922 Pierre Dupont bought a Greek bronze fountain made before 1400 BCE that today is still in use at Longwood Gardens in Chadds Ford, PA. That, for the most part sums up Bronze.

***'The finished man of the world must eat every apple once' – Ralph Waldo Emerson***

## Plant for the Season

Each spring gardeners rely on the ever familiar azaleas and rhododendrons for their colorful blooms. When it comes to summer blooming shrubs, however; the choices seem somewhat limited. Well known for its summer bloom, but often forgotten is the Hydrangea. When a homeowner thinks of Hydrangea, they may typically think of shade, but the Tardiva Hydrangea (*Hydrangea paniculata* 'Tardiva') will withstand full sun. Tardiva Hydrangea is hardy to zone 3, making it one of the most cold hardy Hydrangeas. It is a medium to fast grower and takes well to pruning. Tardiva's blooms appear white and lacy. It flowers quite late, often in September and has a fall color that is a mixture of yellow and maroon. As with Hydrangeas, Tardiva prefers moist well-drained soil.

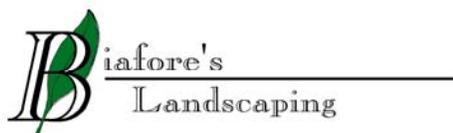
Use this plant as a back border plant or a specimen. It works well with plants of just about any color or texture.

## Questions of Interest – ‘Why do my azaleas look ragged and sickly?’

Azaleas will look yellowish (chlorotic) if their soil pH is too low. This occurs especially around the foundations of new homes because of the limestone content from drainage backfill and leeching of mortar and masonry materials. Raising the pH through the use of a product such as *Mir-acid* will usually help. Azaleas also do not like exposure to late afternoon sun in the winter months. South West exposure can cause leaf scorch to broadleaf evergreens. Azaleas, as are rhododendrons are shallow, fibrous rooted plants. A thick buildup of soil or mulch, or landscape fabric on the root zone will cause the plant to ‘stress’ take on a less than healthy appearance.

***‘Life is not all thorns and singing vultures’ – Morticia Addams***

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