

Design

Build

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# PERCEPTIONS IN LANDSCAPE

Issue 9

Summer/Fall 2003



## Happenings.....

Many of you have already gotten to know some of the new faces in and around our offices this year.

Lisa Rowe came aboard in March of this year as our new office administrator. Lisa has an extensive background in bookkeeping and customer service. Her responsibilities with Biafore's Landscaping include office management and bookkeeping, customer relations, proposal and contract preparation, and working as a project assistant.

Lisa enjoys spending time with her husband Lester and her daughters Mona and Monique.

Linda Bagby is a recent graduate of West Virginia University's Landscape Architecture Program. Linda was inspired to change careers and go back to college for another degree after working as a volunteer on landscaping projects in the community. She currently serves on the Board of Directors of the West Virginia Botanic Garden, Inc. Linda brings to us the ability to expand our design services by continuing to offer our clients landscapes that are both beautiful and functional.

Linda's family, husband Mike and daughters Erin and Kristin, are happy to have more time together since graduation.

### NOTE:

Beginning September 15, 2003, Biafore's Landscaping will be accepting Visa and Master Card for construction, installation and maintenance projects. A 2% discount will be given to those clients who wish to pay by check or cash. Please feel free to contact our office with any questions.

### Employee Profiles...

**Gary Williams** and **Howard Nichols** have become known to our company and our client's as the mainstays of Biafore's Landscaping. Gary and Howard have both been with us for over three years and have contributed to field production in countless ways.

**Gary** has vast experience in plant propagation and landscape installation and maintenance.

**Howard** has a background in tree work and landscape construction.

Howard and Gary both exhibit a work ethic rarely found in the landscape industry today.

**Congratulations** to **Jason Kennedy** and his wife Lisa and their brand new daughter Aleah.

*'Flowers are the sweetest things God ever made and forgot to put a soul into '  
– Henry Ward Beecher*

## Tree Terminology: A Primer

**I**n the green industry we use a tremendous amount of terminology that may be unfamiliar to people outside the profession. When discussing appropriate trees for your lawn or garden it may help to know the following terms:

**Balled and Burlapped or 'B&B'** – B&B trees or shrubs are grown in the ground versus a container. Once the trees are removed from the ground, their root ball is wrapped in burlap and prepared for sale. These trees tend to be larger and can be planted at any time.

**Container Stock** – As the name implies, these trees are grown in containers. Plants in containers are easier to transport and can also be planted any time. They tend to have a lighter soil mix so their water requirements are greater than B&B materials.

**Bare Root** – Bare root trees are sold with no soil on their roots. This makes them very sensitive with a limited planting time. Bare root trees must be planted as soon as possible.

**Dormancy** – Trees that drop their leaves in the fall and leaf out again in spring are known as deciduous. Dormancy is that period of winter rest where very little plant activity takes place.

**Caliper** – A tree's trunk diameter is known as its caliper and is measured at either six or twelve inches from the ground depending on the tree's size. Caliper gives the industry a standard method of measuring nursery stock.

## Mulch.....The Inside Story

**M**ulch is a garden component with which every avid gardener is familiar. Organic mulches offer several benefits to a landscape planting when used properly. Of the various types of mulches available, organic types, especially shredded hardwoods, have proven themselves over and over. The shredded hardwood mulches provide erosion control to planting beds while helping to reduce the amount of weeds appearing in the beds. Keeping soils cool in the summer and insulated in the winter months is another benefit. Mulches also help the soil retain moisture in newly planted areas.

People often inquire about the pros and cons of using a weed barrier under the mulch. Experience has proven again and again that not only do plastics and weed barrier clothes become unsightly over time, they inhibit the amount of oxygen and moisture available to the root zones of plant materials often causing stunting of growth. One of the cultural values of organic mulches is that they decompose over time and continually add organic matter to the soil, thus maintaining the porosity and absorption abilities of the soil.

Mulch can also add to the aesthetic value of a planting and people often apply a coating of mulch on an annual basis. When repeat mulching is needed, care should be taken not to pile mulch against the trunks or stems of plant materials because this will eventually cause decay and disease problems. What about the dyed-red mulches? To quote Steve Bender, gardening writer for Southern Living Magazine ".....I hate them. For one thing, why are they the color of Lucy Ricardo's hair? Secondly, you can't handle the stuff without getting red dye all over your hands".....Finally, anytime the strongest color in your garden comes from mulch, you need to rethink your design.'



## Project Profile

By Erin Hager, RLA

### Ramada Inn

Morgantown, WV

**I**n the Spring of 2002 the Ramada Inn of Morgantown contacted Biafore's Landscaping. The hotel had existing plantings along the foundation of the building and in a large island in front of the hotel's main entrance. The staff and owners wished to add more seasonal interest to the plantings and transform the island into a pleasing yet usable space for their guests and staff.

The existing island planting included four large Spruce, Viburnum, Boxwood, and Crimson Pygmy Barberry. In the island were located three flagpoles which were accessed by ornamental gravel paths. Biafore's Landscaping's new design called for transplanting the Spruce along the property line to screen unsightly views to a neighboring site. The remaining plant materials were rearranged to form a balanced backbone to a perennial garden. Six Heritage River Birch were added to give the space scale and create contrast between the tree's white bark the hotel's red brick façade. A circular concrete paver pattern radiating from the center of the island replaced the ornamental gravel allowing easy access across the island and to the flagpoles. The ornamental gravel areas were redesigned to create narrow pathways from the center of the rectangular shaped island to all four of its corners. Two benches placed in the center of the island to allow visitors and staff to sit and enjoy the space.

Additional perennials were added along the foundation for color, texture, and seasonal interest. New planting areas were created along the entrance drive and in the parking lot islands. The planting included native trees and shrubs, perennials, and ornamental grasses. These plantings helped to better identify the hotel's traffic patterns.



*Landscape maintenance in the 2003 season*

## Dogwoods – Problems and Solutions

By Mitch Mason of Hauge's Garden Center

**A**nyone familiar with the glory of a southeastern spring is sure to know the queen of the native flowering trees is *Cornus florida* (Eastern Flowering Dogwood). With an upright V shaped habit, relatively small mature size (18' to 25' ), great spring flowering, good fall foliage and colorful berries, dogwoods have been extensively used in residential landscaping for many years. In 1984, native dogwoods in North Carolina began to die by the hundreds, and then thousands. Slowly, 'Gradual Dogwood Decline' crept north until it reached West Virginia in the mid 1990's. By this time the casual agent, a fungus called Anthracnose had been identified. The symptoms of Anthracnose are very consistent. First, irregular to ovate spots appear on the leaves, next small branches will begin to die back. Finally, major sections of the tree begin to die out.

All of this seems to be a grim prognosis for a once common tree...but there is hope. First, through selection and breeding at the Universities of North Carolina State and Rutgers, two Anthracnose resistant strains of dogwood have been developed. The Cherokee and Cloud varieties have shown good to very good resistance to the fungus. If you are considering planting a dogwood, please consider a resistant variety. Second...location, location, location. The placement of a dogwood is critical. Make sure the site is well drained and the root ball planted slightly high. A dogwood, fungus or no, will not tolerate standing water. Another consideration is overstory; dogwoods will perform better if there are large trees that will provide some protection from the hottest sun.

Finally, there are some things you can do to protect an existing dogwood even if it is showing symptoms of Anthracnose. It requires spraying the tree three times a year with a fungicide: First before bud break in the spring, second when leaves are about half full size, and finally in the fall after leaf drop.

*Hauge's Garden Center is now open 7 days a week until Christmas!!!!!!!!!!!!*

## Plant for the Season

*By Linda Bagby*

**T**he days are getting shorter. The wind is becoming more cool and brisk. The deciduous trees are starting to change from their lush summer green to gold, orange and red. Autumn is here! It's the end of the growing season for most plants in our area, but one perennial that seems to reach its peak in this season is Sedum 'Autumn Joy'.



Like most other sedums, 'Autumn Joy' has fleshy, succulent-like leaves. It grows upright and usually gets from about 1 ½ to 2 feet tall. Its light green leaves look fresh all summer; it tolerates drought and poor soil readily. It does well in full sun but will also flourish in light shade. Though happy in a wide variety of conditions (except in areas with extremely poor drainage), it tends to become floppy if grown in heavy shade.



Its dense heads of flowers start to bloom late in the summer in a pale salmony- pink. As the season progresses, the blooms gradually turn a rich bronze-red and finally, as the seed heads dry, turn to a nut-brown color that persists through the winter. It even looks good in snow! Good companion plants include grasses and other fall booming perennials.

This plant is a worthy addition to almost any landscape plan. Include some in your garden and you'll be sure to have 'Autumn Joy' for many years to come!

***'If a person cannot love a plant after he has pruned it,  
then he has either done a poor job or is devoid of emotion'***

**Liberty Hyde Bailey**



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