

WVNLA NEWS

West Virginia Nursery & Landscape Association, Inc. www.wvnla.org February 2009

From the Director

WVNLA members,

I am excited and looking forward to being the Executive Director. I am looking forward to creating a personal bond with our members and informing our members with valuable information.

The WVNLA Newsletter will be informative/interactive, with some creative ideas to increase your profits.

Creating a strong bond with our colleges and universities is important to our association. I will develop an interactive presence at these schools and well as on the high school level. Our Association will continue to have a leadership role for our younger generation. We will also have a visible presence in the media.

I look forward to representing WVNLA and meeting all our members!

Peace,


Beth Loflin



Please note: You will find all information regarding our board of directors by clicking on the *officers and contacts* page of our website www.wvnla.org

What do you expect for your business in 2009?

I'll bet I was asked this question a thousand times during this winter's many trade shows and conferences. The truth is; I probably asked a thousand different people the same question. So what do you think?

My unscientific poll has led me to the following conclusions:

1. 2009 will not be as bad as the media says.
2. 2009 will be different than any year so far, (as they all have been).
3. In 2009 I will have to work to get trees dug, to get trucks loaded, and to keep my customers satisfied, (just like every previous year).

Without a doubt, 2009 will bring us new challenges and opportunities. Just as every other year; the trick will be to overcome the challenges and take advantage of the opportunities. The WVNLA wants to be the association that helps you do just that. In the very near future, your association's board of directors will be meeting to discuss how the WVNLA can assist you in making your business more successful. We will be setting goals and objectives for the association for the next two years. What can the WVNLA do to help your business succeed? What do you think our goals should be for the next couple of years?

Please take a few minutes to contact one of the board of directors or our new Executive Director, Beth Loflin, with your thoughts (her card is to the left). We truly want the WVNLA to be an organization that adds value to your business. Help us determine how best to accomplish this goal.

Have a great Spring!

Brett L. Merritt

Brett L. Merritt,
President of the Association



SUCCESS: Under-management Defined by Linda Talley

Many people believe under-management is not providing clear performance requirements for the job or clear and measurable goals with deadlines or performance metrics or feedback on a timely basis or even a lack of at-a boys or at-a girls. And you would be correct, however, there is also under management when a manager's body language is telling on him or her. How does that happen?

1. When the boss/manager says s/he has an open door policy but when a staff member enters, the boss keeps on working without looking up.
2. When the boss/manager schedules a meeting with the staffer and then takes phone calls during the meeting.
3. When the boss/manager stays seated behind his/her big desk and puts the staffer directly across the desk from him/her. Always a confrontational position.
4. When the boss leans back in his chair and crosses her arms as he speaks with the staffer. Who is s/he comforting?
5. When the boss/manager's hand is supporting the face with the index finger pointing up the cheek, the thumb cradling the chin and the middle finger cradling the lower lip. Tell-tale sign of disbelief!

Under-management is always about the boss/manager not being congruent when speaking with a staff person. In other words, what the boss is saying non-verbally does not match what s/he is saying verbally. Congruence counts especially with staff.

Industry Outlook

There is a new wave taking place for the 2009 season, "Conservative spending is cool!". Clients and shopper's memories of the landscape experience will linger longer and have a longer impact than the larger purchase. Garden centers are an integral part of the community and provides an opportunity to create a lifestyle that offers comfort to that special shopper.

Below are several points to ponder for your garden center:

- focus on value rather than sale pricing (recognize on spring demand).

- locavore shopping is hot! Stress locally grown and managed plants by a known reputable company

- container gardening will continue to be huge! Preplanted deck boxes and window boxes of contrasting colors will be sellers.

- stress the importance of "enhancing the value of the home" and "the personal touch of self-fulfillment."

- offer service called the Potting Bench. Customers bring in empty pots and return to pick up custom - made mixed art creations.

- offer educational events for kids that promotes earth-friendly products and actions by kids.

- give clients/customers a recycled shopping bag with company logo on it.

- offer watering conservation ideas and educational classes such as:

- .pervious paving pavers

- .rain garden and rain chains with water barrels

- offer organic gardening ideas (earth-friendly gardening)

- work with a creative art designer who can provide innovative marketing ideas

- have a chef on site that has baked samples and teas that have been created by herbs and vegetables locally grown. (have recipes handy!)

- provide landscape classes that offer ideas for edible plants incorporated into existing beds



GIY Style is “IN”

The best approach for people to feel less dependent on our questionable economy is to “grow it yourself “ or GIY. The National Gardening Association has stated “Grow-It-Yourself” is the new mantra. From blueberries, raspberries to tomatos, people are planting for the greener good. The president of NGA said, “ The largest increase in retail garden sales come from food gardening.” He also stated that renewed interest in spending more time at home has driven people to their gardens. Blended gardening is the new approach to incorporate ornamental plants with food producing plants. This allows a multi-functional landscape from your investment of water, fertilizer, and time. Here are some ideas that can be incorporated into your next client’s landscaping:

- blueberries make excellent deciduous hedges.

- blackberries and raspberries are also great hedges. These can be planted along a property border.

- plant patio peach trees and figs in existing beds.

- plant lowbush blueberries as a groundcover.

- espalier a multi-grafted fair-way apple tree
- place grapes on an existing trellis or fence. The clusters will hang down for easy harvest in late summer.

Clients can be assured to try this new style of design. The blended garden is fun and is great exercise. The convenience of tasty and nutritious food is a must for a healthier lifestyle. Also, it makes up less independence on foriegn food sources and reduces food costs.



Trade Shows:

PANTS
July 28-30
www.PantsHow.com

IGC (Independent Garden Center Show)
August 18-20, 2009
Chicago
www.igcshow.com

National Hardware Show and Lawn and Garden World
May 5-7
Las Vegas
www.nationalhardwareshow.com

The Super Floral Show
June 9-12
Atlanta
www.superfloralshow.com

National Lawn and Lawn Show
June 16-19
Atlanta
www.hlgshow.com

OFA Short Course and Trade Show
July 11-14
www.ofa.org

Farwest Show
August 20-29,2009
Portland, Oregon
www.farwestshow.com

Turfgrass and Landscape Expo
November 4-5
Long Beach, CA
www.LandscapeOnline.com

Innovative Company Sources:

urban Gardeners patio containers
www.urbangardener.net

Luchuza plant systems
- new planters for windowsills
www.kokocompany.com

Interatarp cargo liners
www.interatarp.com

Custom bamboo fencing (easy to install!)
www.bambooandrattan.com



Coolaroo (outdoor shade fabric)
www.coolaroo.com

The Hellebores Are Coming, The Hellebores Are Coming

When American Nurseryman Editor Sally D. Benson first asked me to write a 1500 word story about Hellebores, I told her that it was tantamount to trying to read the complete works of Shakespeare in one evening. Well, she said, "With all due respect to the great bard, just give us a teasing taste for these magical plants"

So here's a brief glimpse into a Genus of plants whose popularity still hasn't peaked in the U.K. after 50 years and is just beginning its run in the US.

Commonly referred to as Christmas Roses (*Helleborus niger*), and Lenten Roses (*Helleborus orientalis*), Hellebores are primarily native to Europe, with one recently discovered exception, *H. thibetanus* from Sichuan Province in China. Their taxonomic home is in the Ranunculaceae (Buttercup) family, the same family as Paeonia, Clematis, Thalictrum, Trollius and many other well known and wonderful garden plants.

They can be broken down into two basic groups, the "Caulescent" types, meaning those whose foliar parts are borne on stems, such as *H. foetidus*, *H. argutifolius* and *H. lividus* etc, and the "Acaulescent" types whose foliage emanates from the basal portion of the plant such as *H. orientalis*, *H. purpurescens* etc.

With one exception (*H. lividus*), Hellebores can be grown almost anywhere in the United States. Culture is simple. They prefer moist, but not wet, rich, organic soil in full to light shade. In areas where winter is severe and there is no reliable snow cover, a mulch of shredded hardwood bark provides a warm blanket. They are greedy feeders, and when using a timed release fertilizer such as Osmocote etc, I recommend the highest range. A Ph 5.5-7.0 is fine.

Hellebores have relatively few pest or disease problems. In some areas, they may be prone to an attack of Aphids, but the usual remedies will take care of this problem. An occasional bout with Botrytis which can be caused by poor air circulation in a cool damp area can be cured with Copper Sulphate, a relatively innocuous fungicide.

In these West Virginia Mountains, where we have large deer populations, Hellebores are the one plant that they turn their noses up at.

Hellebores are wonderful companion plants for Galanthus (Snowdrops), Primula (Primroses), Tiarella (Foam Flowers), Epimediums (Barrenwort), Pulmonaria (Lungwort), and..... well just about anything that pleases you.

It's hard to find a more captivating, easy to grow plant. Even if they never flowered, these garden gems would be a worthwhile addition to virtually any garden. But flower they do and in brilliant array of colors shapes and forms.



The so called "Orientalis Hybrids", which, to be taxonomically correct are now being referred to as *Helleborus x hybridus* are the result of generations of crosses between such species as *H. purpurescens*, *H. torquatus*, *H. orientalis*, *H. atrorubens* et al. They have tough, leathery, textured palmate foliage that is evergreen in most climates and 1 1/2" - 3" flowers that start in March and last into May. The color of the petals, which are really sepals, ranges from a mauve pink to an almost blackish purple with every imaginable color in between including pure white, yellow and green.

There are many spotted forms which show the influence of *H. orientalis* ssp *guttatus* in their heritage. You can expect a 12" to 18" tall clump about 18" to 24" in diameter in a few years.

These large, colorful flowers droop down on a 45 degree angle. There is a natural explanation for this if you consider the weather in late Spring. The drooping habit is a survival mechanism and the plants natural defense against snow, sleet and rain that kills pollen grains which would prevent pollination.

A really neat way to display the flowers is to cut them with about an inch of stem and

float them in a bowl of water. They can last for weeks as they slowly fade into completely different colors.

Years of breeding in the U.K. and Germany have led to several named H x hybridus cultivars, most of which are unavailable even in those countries, as the Hellebore is a very slow clump forming plant and not very generous in giving up as many divisions as it would take to satisfy demand. In light of this, most breeders are now offering "Strains". A strain is an unflowered seedling of a particular set of parents. In Hellebores, most strains usually resemble the better qualities of their parents. To date, tissue culture has proven disappointing in speeding up the propagation process, but there is hope for the future.

Hybridizing your own Hellebores is simple and fun. They are one of the easiest plants to breed. Take a paint brush or dark pipe cleaner and dab it onto the open anthers of one plant and touch the pollen grains to the sticky stigma of another. That's all there is to it. Try it with two plants that have different merits such as color, shape, size etc. Keep good records of your crosses. Use cotton drawstring bags weighted with a marble or two to prevent the seeds from popping open and spilling onto the ground.

Hellebores are very easy to grow from seed. The attractive flowers produce copious amounts of pollen during their long flowering season and you can rest assured that no matter how inclement the weather, there will be at least a few days that the bees are flying about spreading pollen from plant to plant. The attractive seed pods swell rapidly as the weather warms and then one day without prior notice, pop open spilling their cargo of plump black seeds all over the ground. These seeds contain immature embryos that will mature in the moist warm leaf litter under the parent plant. As the weather turns colder the seeds will germinate, usually in late December or early January. It takes 2-4 years before you see your first flowers, what a great way to learn patience and discipline.

Hellebores can also be propagated by division. Best time of year is early Spring or late Autumn. Dig or unpot the plants and hose off all of the soil so that you can see where to make your cuts. Use a sharp knife that has been dipped in alcohol and then rinsed in water. Try to leave at least two buds on each rhizome. Some plants may not flower in the year following division, but don't be concerned as they need that period to recover from their

surgery.

Helleborus foetidus, whose name means foul odor has the dubious common name of "Stinking Hellebore". That's a bad rap, as the delicate, lacy foliage has an unusual but unobjectionable scent. Several cultivars exist, the most famous is H. 'Wester Flisk'. This plant was discovered in the garden of Mrs. Mamie Walker of Newburgh, Scotland in the early 70's. Its calling card is the brilliant red stem and the contrast of the green leaf petioles as they clasp it.

Helleborus niger is a white flowered species. Commonly referred to as the "Christmas Rose" as its frequently in bloom during the holiday season. The specific epithet, *niger* refers to its black roots. This is probably the hardiest of all the species and can most likely survive into zone 3. There are several cultivars and strains of *H. niger*, the most well know being 'Potters Wheel' an exceptionally large flowering strain, with flowers of up to 5". This strain was developed during the 50's at Washfield Nursery in Kent, England.

Helleborus argutifolius, formerly known as *H. lividus corsicus* has coarse, toothed, arrow shaped foliage. It is slightly less hardy than *H x hybridus* and should be given some extra protection outside of zone 6. It also requires better drainage. In 1930's Sir Frederick Stern crossed this species with *Helleborus lividus*. *H. lividus* is extremely tender even in most of the U.K. The cross brought some of the best traits of both parents into a interspecific hybrid seed strain known as *H. x sternii*. The resulting plants have the hardiness from *H. argutifolius* and the lovely silvery markings of *H. lividus*. I can't remember a single garden that I've visited that wouldn't benefit from the addition of a Hellebore or few.

Happy Gardening,

[Barry Glick](#)

aka Glicksterus maximus
aka The Cyber-Plantsman
Sunshine Farm & Gardens
HC 67 Box 539 B

Renick WV 24966 USA

304-497-2208

EMAIL - barry@sunfarm.com

sunfarm.com

Altitude 3650 feet * Latitude 38.04N *

Longitude 80.26W * USDA Zone 5

(please see the next page for futher reading)



Further Reading about Hellebores

Hellebores, Brian Matthews, Alpine Garden Society Publications, Woking UK 1989 This is the most complete taxonomic reference on the Genus. Its loaded with historical information and is definitely for the serious Hellebore fancier. Unfortunately it is currently out of print. The Alpine Garden Society is planning a revision and reprint soon. I will announce the new publication date as soon as I know it.

Gardeners Guide to Growing Hellebores, Rice & Strangman, Timber Press, Portland OR 1993 More of a book for the grower-collector, still has a lot of taxonomic information but more emphasis on growing and culture. Loaded with lots of great color photos by that master photographer Roger Phillips. Includes information and photographs on hybridization.

Hellebores, Marlene Ahlburg, Batsford, London UK 1993 Hellebores from a continental European perspective. This is a translation from Marlene's 1989 German language book. It has a good bit of photographs and includes a descriptive taxonomic text as well.

Help Build Membership - Pass along this Newsletter

WVNLA's primary goal is to conduct educational seminars throughout the year. The seminars present internationally recognized authorities, providing inspiration for our members to become leaders in the industry. Seminars are presented at no cost to members and provide you with the opportunity to receive continuing education credits for state mandated certificates.

We cooperate with and support the West Virginia Department of Agriculture programs. We provide a bi-monthly informational newsletter and timely announcements on issues important to our members. We contribute information useful to the Horticultural Research Institute (see www.anla.org for research goals).

In order to promote fellowship and share knowledge and expertise among members, we conduct meetings and tours throughout the state.

On a regional level, WVNLA co-sponsors the annual Mid-Atlantic Nursery Trade Show along with the Maryland and Virginia NLA's. This nationally recognized event showcases and facilitates sales of Green Industry products. As a co-sponsor, WVNLA receives funds that directly benefit our members.

On a national level, we contribute to the ANLA Lighthouse, ANLA-PAC and other governmental relations programs that benefit the Green Industry.

We invite you to become a member and take advantage of our benefits. Contact us on

the web at www.wvnla.org (where you can print out an application) or by mail us at the address below.

Thank you for your interest in WVNLA.

Membership inquiries: please contact Beth Loflin at 1507 Dogwood Road, Charleston, West Virginia 25314 or at wvnlassoc@gmail.com.



Colorful plastic containers ready to be recycled!





Maples

Successful 2009 Winter Conference

The West Virginia Nursery and Landscape Association's 2009 Annual Winter Conference was well attended in Charleston, West Virginia. Governor Manchin began the conference with positive comments regarding our industry and how valuable out State needs our continual support.

The speakers were well received at the Embassy Suites on January 22 and 23rd. Nationally recognized speakers Tracy DiSabato-Aust spoke on high impact low care plants and Carol Reese spoke on plants any their many uses in the landscape. Louis Bauer, Michael Goatley, James DeGrey David, Rick Darke, Joe Boggs, Bob Lyons, Bill MacDonald, and Dennis Werner also presented valuable information to our attendees.

Local speakers Mack Miles, Lynne Schwartz-Barker, Charlie Bowen and Spencer Atkins also gave their presentations on creating an identity for your business, landscape design, design for your business and weather patterns and changes.

The two joint sessions gave members the opportunity to learn more about plant material, business ideas and staff relationships to turf management and plant transportation. Members also filled out speaker evaluation forms which qualified them for a \$100.00 gift certificate. George Bohach of TerraCare was the lucky winner!

Pesticide recertification recipients received credits from the WV Department of Agriculture for attending 5 of the sessions.

Many thanks go out to Bill Mills and Brad Bearce who organized and planned the successful 2009 Winter Conference!

The following companies/people have been accepted as

New WVNLA Members:

- Halian
- Acorn Farms
- Green Mountain Enterprise
- Hurley's
- Lisa's Gardenscapes
- Saunders Lawn Care
- Premier Landscapes & Lawncare, Inc.
- Elizabeth McClintock
- TLC Property Maintenance
- TerraSalis Milton, Holly Hoffmann
- The Davey Tree Expert Company
- The Grounds Keeper
- Ameriturf
- Bobby's Lawn Care
- Saunders Brothers
- Proscape of WV, Bud Cottrill
- Cleary Chemical

WVU Horticulture Support

WVNLA continues to support the WVU Horticulture Program by donating \$3500.00 for educational purposes.

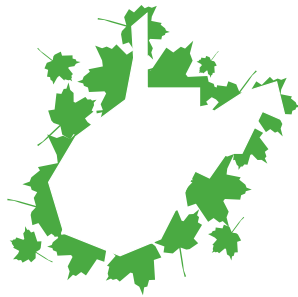
This allows students to gain valuable hands-on and visual knowledge. The students will be making a presentation to the Board in the future on how the donation helped them gain educational experience.



Outgoing Director Brad Bearce & New Director Beth Loflin at the Winter Conference 2009.

photo: Chip Ellis





West Virginia
Nursery & Landscape
Association, Inc.

*Helping our members become leaders
in the nursery, landscape & garden center industries*

www.wvnla.org

WVNLA  **NEWS**

1507 Dogwood Road
Charleston, West Virginia
25314