

WVNLA NEWS

West Virginia Nursery & Landscape Association, Inc. www.wvnla.org March/April 2011

The Winter Symposium

The 2011 Winter Symposium went off without a hitch. Even the snowy Thursday evening speakers had a great crowd and the attendees thoroughly enjoyed the program.

The 60 WVNLA members who gathered in Charleston heard a variety of speakers and experts from all over the U.S. There is a full photo essay on page 4 and 5.

Attendees were treated to visual (power point) presentations and lectures about native plants, plants from around the world gathered for production, pests, pollination, how to create environments where pests and plants can live in harmony, to name a few.

The two day event ended with the WVNLA Awards presentation. Please see story below.

2011 Award Winners

The Awards Program was established to recognize outstanding performance and business practice in the green industry from a WVNLA member. Judges for the program were Carter Giltanan, (noted gardening expert), Traci Bradley (University of Charleston's Interior Design Program), and Joe Young (Landscape Architect with Triad Engineering). Judging criteria was based on overall appearance (design quality, principles and appropriateness), degree of difficulty, quality and appearance of materials, and a written narrative describing project scope, difficulty, and other points of interest. Each first place winner received a \$1000 award.

Awards went to the following Association members in the noted categories:

Residential Design/Build over \$10,000

First Place Winner: Biafore Landscape Development, Morgantown, West Virginia - Designer, Michael Biafore for work on the Dean Residence

Honorable Mention: Creation Gardens and Design, Lesage, West Virginia -

Designer, Janie Carpenter for work on the Cremeans Residence

article and photos continued on page 5



Dr. Laura Deeter, OSU, shared her passion for plants and her vanity plate at the Symposium.

New Board Roster

A new group of Board members and officers was selected at the Winter Symposium in Charleston. The board meets regularly to manage the activities of the organization.

WVNLA Board Officers 2011:

President: Patrick Biafore, Biafore Landscape Development

Vice President: Bill Mills, TerraSalis

Secretary: Tim Forren, Forren Soil

Treasurer: Mark Springer, Lavalette Nursery and Garden Center

Past President: Brett Merritt, G&G Nursery

WVNLA Board members 2011:

Chris Chanlett, Groundworks

Ed Mason, Aspen Corporation

Bud Cottrill, Proscap of West Virginia

Scott Barnitz, Bob's Market and Greenhouses

John Jett, West Virginia Department of Agriculture

“One man’s trash is another man’s trellis.”

Carol Reese



Compost Tea

A Swap Shop - Groundworks presentation by Torula Chanlett-Avery And Yarrow Hunt-Levine at the WVNLA meeting January 20, 2011

We learned about compost tea at the winter meeting in 2010. To make it in our small nursery we found a 55 gallon soy sauce drum. We purchased nylon curtains at a thrift store and sewed them into tea bags.

Our recipe for 50 gallons:

- 20 lbs dried compost
- ½ c humic acid
- 1-2 c dried kelp
- 3 Tbs dried molasses

Put dry mix into nylon bag and suspend in the water. Aerate the tea with an aquarium pump labeled for a large aquarium in the barrel for 24-48 hours.

To water with the tea we place a submersible pump in the tank with a garden hose attached. We applied in the nursery section by section every week or so. We could see visible results on newly potted plugs where plants perked up faster. We particularly liked using it on native plants, boxwood and dogwoods that didn't seem to respond as well with slow release fertilizers.

We used the compost tea as a base in the back pack sprayer for the organic fungicide Actinovate. We strain the compost tea into the sprayer with 2 teaspoons of dried actinovate and spray any plant susceptible to fungus problems. We sprayed bi-weekly through the growing season and didn't need any other variety of fungicide.

We created a compost tea kit for retail with a five gallon bucket that held a small aquarium pump, dried kelp and molasses, a cotton tea bag, and instructions.



Team Groundworks with their award winning Garden Center Display from the 2011 Awards.

A Member Business Changes Focus

Bill Mills reports on TerraSalis

We have chosen to focus on what we do best and what our employees enjoy the most.

Officially we have closed our retail divisions. We will still have a few choice and unusual plants for sale along with examples of what we consider to be the best decorative elements for the garden as well as furniture and vessels. We want to be able to share with our client base a smattering of these products so they can experience them first hand. This spring some things will have a price tag and be able to walk out the door, but this shopping experience will be on a very intimate scale. We will be encouraging special orders, very much as one would with an interior decorator's salon. We will continue to view what is available in the market so that we can make suggestions and referrals according to our individual client's needs.

Catalogs and photographs are now used to facilitate custom orders for our clients. This allows us to deliver directly to a client without the cost of holding a deep inventory, inventory that can diminish in quality and value over time. A smaller inventory can still be exciting and workable. It allows us to focus and offer great presentation.

Plant ordering is not nearly as flexible as hard goods. Once again we have honed in on who delivers quality and the breadth of the plant species we rely on. Deliveries from the West Coast and other distant points are most reliable in the spring, but often in the fall months as well.

This same approach is how we have designed our maintenance client's needs. Each client is interviewed and a program is created to meet their needs and lifestyle. The usual services come into play; weekly visits and inspections, mowing, fertilizing, pruning, bulb & annual plantings, etc. We try to leave a property in pristine shape after each visit. Some clients have us on special days before they host guests; some have us create beautiful, lush seasonal decorations; and others, cut flower arrangements. We try to meet as many needs as possible, and deliver these services in such a manner that the client can rely on an elevated level of service, with or without their input. Many of our clients have more than one home so communication is often reliant on e-mail and cell phones. We ↗



want clients to arrive at their home with a smile on their face, and for our crews to be proud of their day's work. Maintenance clients often become or start as design/install clients.

Our services are not inexpensive, but they offer great value and a sense of reliability for those who are in need of such service. TerraSalis works regionally; Ashland, Clarksburg, Charleston, Morgantown, and Lewisburg loosely define the geographic region we service.

We recommend and work with Architects, Landscape Architects, and Engineers when such services are needed. A list of reliable Stone Masons, Contractors and Excavators and other services is kept for referral as needed. The quality of their work needs to meet our standards.

I travel and look at other garden centers, visit manufacturers and markets, network with others in the industry and visit gardens as often as possible. These travels keep my creativity stimulated and my eye fresh.

Our hours of operation have shortened, with the gates open from ten in the morning until four in the afternoon. We are no longer here on weekends but are willing to meet with clients almost any time by appointment, at their home or here on the Dickinson Farm.

Gradually we are adjusting the look of the property, buildings and grounds. I feel that it is important for those who work at TerraSalis as well as those who come to visit, to arrive at a truly beautiful and creative place. I have visited other businesses with similar philosophies and have witnessed good employee retention and great morale. Having pride in our work ethic and our employees is very important to us. We encourage our employees to bring new ideas and clients to the table.

The logo for TerraSalis features a stylized green square icon to the left of the company name "TerraSalis" in a serif font.

Landscape Design, Installation & Maintenance for
Fine Properties

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We also took this opportunity to revise our logo, the tag line, our website and all printed materials such as business cards, letterhead ↗



and envelopes. We have continued with our online marketing and news columns along with support advertising in the print medium.

Change is constant in the world we live in. Change needs to be accommodated for an organization to flourish in these fascinating times.

Very Special Employee Training Offer

At the February board meeting your Board of Directors approved a major pilot program for member's employee training and education. The WVNLA has partnered with Landscape Safety Training Systems to offer the first 25 WVNLA member companies who sign up, online training for up to 10 of their employees.

This is really a no-strings-attached offer, pre-paid by the WVNLA and is another of the many benefits of membership. If your company were to pay for this it would cost you \$800. There are 23 online videos and exams in both English and Spanish, customizable training checklists for infield training and an OSHA-friendly sign-off sheet for every piece of equipment.

We strongly encourage you and your staff to visit www.landscapesafety.com and explore the site. Their site provides information about the available training, benefits, testimonials and demo videos of training.

If you are interested in further education for your company, call or email Landscape Safety Training and identify yourself as being a WVNLA member. It's that easy.

Their contact information is:
jay@landscapesafety.com or 877.482.2323.
You will want to speak with Jay or Arden. They will further advise you as to the kind of training available and answer all your questions regarding this offer.



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Swap Shop Recap

The "Swap Shop" workshop idea was kicked off during the WVNLA 2011 Winter Symposium, recently held in Charleston, WV. Members were given a 3-minute window to discuss and share their new ideas, tips and suggestions with other members. All ideas were practical and had been tried and true at their given locations. Below are some of the ideas shared:

· Groundworks - making compost tea (full article on page 2)

· Aspen Corporation, Ed Mason - discussed using a moisture → meter to confirm watering for plants, trees and shrubs, solving problems and creating solutions.

· Bud Cottrill of Proscape- → says, make sure you copy down and save all the registration numbers on your equipment. If there is a theft at your business, this information will be invaluable to you and authorities.

· Aaron Helmick - discussed having special item sales based on days of the week. Friday is "Mulch Day", or make a day a certain type of "Special Day" for products you want to move.

· Mack Miles - shared iPad capabilities for presentations and www.moo.com, 100 mini business cards in full color for \$19.99.

· Bill Mills - discussed how a credit card device/service (Square or Go Payment) can be used with a smart phone for immediate billing/credit card processing at the customer's → front door or anywhere you want to accept a payment Square: squareup.com and Intuit Go Payment: intuit-gopayment.com

· Beth Loflin - showed photos of Nicky's Garden Center in Wheeling - they incorporated *next column*

a fresh Herb Cutting garden on site and also sell/market locally grown produce in Wheeling along with a child friendly area to keep

children occupied while parents browse.

· Tim Forren, Forren Soil - discussed the virtues of saying "No". Whether to a client or an employee, don't go down a path that your intuition and your personal business sense tells you not to.

· Martha Cochran, North Hills Nursery - discussed recycling styrofoam containers into faux stone planters.

· Brett Merrit, G&G Nursery discussed the use of your smartphone video cameras to make inexpensive training videos for staff education.

· Mark Springer discussed his use of a digital camera to show his crew or his clients where new items will be planted or old ones removed.

This workshop was one of the most popular we have ever had. It was lively AND informative. We will be continuing this workshop in the 2012 Winter Meeting and strongly encourage members to submit their ideas to be shared in the newsletter. Just email or snail mail us your Swap Shop ideas.



Awards Press

Media outlets in the communities where our 2011 Landscape Award winners are based received press releases, a complete list of winners, their categories and photos of the winning entries. Special mention of the businesses in the service area of the particular media were noted and several of those press outlets requested additional information and/or photos. Congratulations winners!

Awards continued

Water Feature

First Place Winner: Greenleaf Landscape, Marietta, Ohio - Designer, Patrick Miller for work on the Murphy Residence

Honorable Mention: Creation Gardens and Design, Lesage, West Virginia - Designer, Janie Carpenter for work on the Lamp Residence

Hardscape

First Place Winner: Biafore Landscape Development, Morgantown, West Virginia - Designer, Erin Hager for work on the Cavallo Residence

Honorable Mention: Greenleaf Landscape, Marietta, Ohio - Designer, Patrick Miller for work on the Smith Residence

Container Gardening

First Place Winner: Flowerscape, Sissonville, West Virginia- Designer, Lynne Schwartz-Barker for work on the Payne Residence

Honorable Mention: Biafore Landscape Development, Morgantown, West Virginia - Designer, Eric Calhoun for work on the Ferrari Residence

Garden Center Display

First Place Winner: Groundworks Garden Center, Hinton, West Virginia - Chris and Torula Chanlett-Avery (*see photo, page 2, bottom*)



(l to r) Presenters Carol Reese & Rick Lewandowski



(l to r) Presenters Laura Miller & Rick Crowder



(l to r) Winners Lynn Schwartz-Barker, Patrick & Michael Biafore and Eric Calhoun. (below) Rick Crowder showed a display in Japan featuring a variety of products available all in one location.



(l to r) Attendees view all the award winners' projects. The Symposium venue, The Summit Conference Center.



Quotes of Note



Presenter Carol Reese (top, left photo) said: "If you kill a forsythia, maybe you shouldn't garden." Carol also said she has a severe case of CHAD, compulsive horticultural acquisition disorder. We bet she does. And you?

Welcome New Members

The WVNLA wishes to welcome these new members to our organization.

Big Laurel Landscape Nursery,

Nicholas Gainer
1972 Jakes Run Road,
Fairview, WV 26570

North Hills Nursery,

Martha Cochran
2110 Millstone Run Road,
Napier, WV 26631

Honeysuckle Hill Gardens,

Terri Johnson
Route 1, Box 279 H.,
Fayetteville, WV 25840

Sloping Acres,

Donna Myles
HC66 Box 300,
Renick, WV 24966

Bob's Market and Greenhouses, Inc.,

Scott Barnitz
P.O. Box 67, Mason, WV 25260

An Acre of Attitudes

Everyone is given an acre of attitudes at birth. It's yours to tend and garden and weed and live with. You can plant bitterness or good humor. Feel free to fertilize and tend the feelings and approaches that you want to spend time with. Unless you hurt someone, this acre is all yours.

Probably worth putting up a decent fence, so that only the attitudes that you choose will have a chance to put down seeds, but it's certainly a bad idea to put up a wall, because a walled garden is no good to anyone passing by. You get to decide what comes through your fence gate, right?

Watching out for invasive species—spending sufficient time on weeding and pruning and staking seem to be incredibly powerful tools for accomplishing the life you want. I refuse to accept that an attitude is an accident of birth or an unchangeable constant. That would be truly horrible to contemplate.

Seth Godin

Seth is a best selling author and writes a daily blog. You can find out more at:

www.sethgodin.com

