Green Works
Industry Award Winners -

Distinctive Landscaping
Grand Honor Award

Julie Moir Messervy Design Studio
Grand Honor Award

Landshapes
Exceeds Excellence Award

Tree Works, Ltd.
Exceeds Excellence Award
You’re going to wonder what this has to do with managing a nursery or landscape business – please humor me, I’ll bring it around...

About a month ago I had just finished a Kettlebells class and was sitting in a limp heap on the floor trying to maneuver my socks when a classmate asked about what was happening on our farm that week. I briefly described how we had just finished processing three pigs (by ourselves for the first time) and how the next step was to brine the hams and bacon in the root cellar and then hang them in the smokehouse. Wincing, she asked, “Did they have names?” and when I replied yes, “Ron, Fred and George after the Weasley brothers in Harry Potter” she replied, “Wow, that’s really real, you guys are really living it” (yes, three ‘reals’). This exchange got me thinking about “real” vs. fantasy, about embracing rawness vs. seeking the comfort of oblivion, about directing ourselves vs. allowing ourselves to be directed. It’s sort of ironic that the conversation should arise there, since I go to Kettlebells twice a week to be purposefully directed – for somebody else to push me and tell me every minute for an hour what I should be doing while I empty my brain and breathe and sweat, essentially into oblivion.

I believe firmly in the benefits of living a “raw” life – that having an intimate and visceral connection with the creation of our basic needs, food, clothing, and shelter, will help us realize the true value of things, reduce our consumption and teach our children stewardship. I am also fully aware of just how uncomfortable this “rawness” makes most people feel. Each time we slaughter an animal on the farm, whether it’s chickens, sheep or pigs, friends ask us “Did the slaughter upset the girls?”, and each time the answer is no, they were not afraid at all but genuinely curious. Their lack of fear actually surprised me the first time – I was expecting tears and protests – but it became obvious to us that they would only be afraid or upset if we were, and yes it was a powerful experience, but not painful or dangerous. I think that most people prefer to have their food “packaged” and separated from its raw state because touching the web of life makes us feel vulnerable. I see clients react the same way about dirt and weeds all the time. I am not saying we all need to regress back to the 1800s and live in houses with dirt floors (I enjoy modern comfort as much as anybody) but I do think we need a societal reality check. We occasionally need to rest in the comfort of oblivion, but if it defines our experience we miss the root of who we are and how we are connected.

Over the Holidays I helped a group of 8 year old children make bird treats – the idea was to spread lard (from our pigs) on a bagel and then coat it with birdseed and decorate it with dried fruit and hang them from trees in the woods. Three-quarters of the kids didn’t want to do the project because it looked “yucky” - they were afraid to touch something unfamiliar and get their hands dirty. It took some serious reassuring that it was okay. I had similar experiences while I was teaching environmental education to sixth graders from wealthy suburbs of NYC 20 years ago (they were afraid to sit on the grass, let alone get their hands dirty) but here we are in rural VT and the story is the same. It was an alarm bell in my brain - Messy is scary - maybe we’re doing our protection job as parents a bit too well. What I find really scary is our increasing separation from experience, both our insulation from the natural world and the people around us. And if I see it in children who are naturally more open, how insulated are we becoming as adults? How can we practice compassion if we don’t get our hands dirty? Why will we want to save nature or help our fellow humans if we don’t get to know them through authentic experiences? **How can I use my position as a landscape designer to help clients re-establish their connection with nature and thus learn compassion and achieve greater health?**

continued on page 3
Recently I was ranting to my Dad about how the world seemed to be going to hell fast and how I felt anxious and impatient -like I should be “out there doing something big that really makes a difference” like negotiating global climate treaties in Durban. He surprised me by saying, “people will always need beauty – it’s the glue that holds humanity together” and he’s right, because otherwise ‘Mad Max’ here we come. Yet sometimes it’s hard to see how small changes can make a difference – that thinking globally and acting locally is enough. But persevere we must – one backyard at a time. So while we are doing our best to reduce our carbon footprints, support our local food systems and economies, protect wilderness, and teach our children hope, compassion, and the importance of getting our hands dirty – we’ll also create beauty within our landscape.  

**We’ll create colorful, sustainable landscapes that include spaces that encourage our neighbors to relax, connect with each other and see the natural world in a different light. We’ll build authentic experiences outside.**

I realize that I probably take everything waaay too seriously – they are just landscapes after all – but conviction is a powerful thing, and people can tell the difference. To do something well you have to mean it. I was reading an article in Fortune magazine about Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz who was recently named “2011 Business Person of the Year”. While I think that small business is best, there are still lessons to be learned from large successes and failures. The thing that really struck me about the Schultz article (other than the fact that he is a marketing genius) is his authenticity:

> “At a recent Nasdaq luncheon Q&A, Schultz was challenged about his expansive view of ‘corporate social responsibility’ – ‘Companies should not have a singular view of profitability,’ he replied, with the conviction of a preacher rather than the caution of a CEO. There needs to be a balance between commerce and social responsibility … The companies that are authentic about it will wind up as the companies that make more money…To be a benevolent organization, you have to make a lot of profit, but if your sole goal is to maximize profit, you’re on a collision course with time.”

Ghandi said “You must be the change you want to see in the world”, and I think we need self-directed action now more than ever to achieve “sustainable prosperity”. Personally, I would like to see an economy that is focused on an increase in quality of life based on intrinsic values rather than “more” and “bigger” (consumption of goods). If you have a moment, check out the Center for The New American Dream, [www.newdream.org](http://www.newdream.org) and Juliet Schor’s book “Plentitude: The New Economics of True Wealth”. **The businesses that really care about the well-being of their communities and take benevolent action, will succeed.** Our landscape and nursery industry is uniquely positioned to play a big role in a new “sustainable economy”, and I am grateful that I am able to improve the quality of my clients’ lives by creating landscapes that help them “touch the web of life”. This winter I encourage you to consider your own reasons for doing what you do - the answer might just prove the success of your business in the long run.

This is the last newsletter of my term and it has been a pleasure serving on the Board and also as President. I have benefited from the experience, the greatest of which was getting to know all of you, and I am grateful. I look forward to seeing you at the Annual Meeting, and hope you find some quiet time this winter to spend with your family and friends.

*Rebecca Lindenmeyr, Green Works/VNLA President* 

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### Are you and your employees certified?

Now is a great time to order VCH manuals for yourself and/or your employees as the season gets underway. Prove your level of professionalism and commitment to excellence to your clients. Order a VCH manual and take the test this Winter to become a Vermont Certified Horticulturist. Contact Kristina MacKulin or Claybrook Griffith for ordering and test information.

### For information on Advertising in The Dirt contact

Kristina at the Green Works Office - 888.518.6484
Green Works Hosts Strategic Planning Day

The Green Works Board of Directors together with a representative sample of the membership met on October 28, 2011 for a special Strategic Planning Day held at UVM. The goal was to discuss some challenges that currently face the Association in order to help ensure its future success. The 19 participants included: Rebecca Lindenmeyr, Joan Lynch, Claybrook Griffith, VJ Comai, Ed Burke, Dan Redondo, Brian Vaughan, Kristina MacKulin, Nate Carr, Judith Irven, David Loyaen, Tim Lomasney, Peter van Berkum, Leonard Perry, Carol MacLeod, John Padua, Melissa Bushey Rosenberg, and Jennifer and Eric Daigle.

Rebecca Lindenmeyr presented a report that summarized the current status of the Association and its challenges - topics included the following:

- Membership - current membership size and business type, geographical distribution, dues income, active and associate member trends
- Programs and Events - mission, income vs. expenses, VCH, research & awards, legislation monitoring
- Finances - fixed costs vs. fixed income

Next the participants broke out into subgroups to discuss the major issues and challenges:

- Are our Programs and Services meeting the needs of our members based on our demographic data?
- How do we continue to attract new members? Half of our members are new within the last 5 years – how do we connect them to the whole?
- How do we continue to grow new leaders and develop the Board of Directors – ensuring appropriate representation of membership and a skilled group of leaders?
- Financial Security – how do we ensure the future? Our fixed income (membership dues) does not currently cover our fixed costs (operating expenses) – do we increase dues, decrease expenses or both? How? The Nest Egg – how much risk is tolerable? How much do we need? How do we rebuild it?

Finally the group came together and summarized their sub-group discussions and recommendations were recorded. The Board will present a summary from this day at the Winter Meeting to be held at the UVM-Davis Center on February 15th, 2012 during the business meeting. Further information will be provided in the next issue of The Dirt.
New Green Works Member

Carroll Concrete
Jon Singleton
8 Reeds Mill Road
Newport, NH 03773
603-863-1000, ext. 632
jon@redirocknc.com
www.carrollconcrete.com
Category: Supplier
Associate Member

Champlain Valley Landscaping
Paul Wieczoreck
2800 Lincoln Hill Road
Hinesburg, VT 05461
802-434-4216
cvl@champlainvalleylandscaping.com
www.champlainvalleylandscaping.com
Category: Landscape Design, Landscape Design/Build, Landscape Install Maintenance, Nursery Retail, Nursery Wholesale
Active Member

Intervale Conservation Nursery
Mike Ingalls
180 Intervale Road
Burlington, VT 05401
802-660-0440, ext. 114
mike@intervale.org
www.intervale.org
Category: Nursery Wholesale
Active Member

Vermont Launches Forest Pest First Detector Program
by VJ Comai

On December 15, 2011 I took part in a three hour training session to become a Vermont Forest Pest First Detector (FPFD). This program is modeled after the Minnesota First Detectors Program and is part of the Federal National Plant Diagnostic Network (NPDN) First Detectors program.

The program was launched in response to the unprecedented threat Vermont’s forest face from the Emerald Ash Borer, Asian Longhorned Beetle, and the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid. The program is designed to involve citizens who are on the front line of defense against likely infestations and prepare them to meet, work with and educate the public about exotic tree pests.

The goal of Vermont’s FPFD program is to create a group of well-trained committed leaders at the community level to:

• Increase public awareness about the threat of tree pests to Vermont’s forests.
• Distribute information and updates about invasive forest tree pests to the public.
• Serve as a local ‘expert’ on the tree pests.
• Assist state and federal partners with coordinating local volunteer efforts.
• Assist state and federal partners and local communities in preparing for and responding to invasive forest pest infestations.

The role of First Detectors is to serve as a liaison between the general public, the community, and federal and state partners including (APHIS), The Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation, Agency of Agriculture, and University of Vermont Extension. Early detection of invasive forest pest is essential in initiating an effective response for controlling and limiting the potentially devastating affects of these pests to Vermont’s forests and public awareness is the key.

The state will be holding a second training session for the FPFD program in March in Windham County and hopes to have individuals trained statewide within the year. I highly encourage you to consider taking part in this program and become a Vermont Forest Pest First Detector. To find out more about this important program and to educate yourself on the invasive forest pests threatening Vermont’s forests go to www.vtinvasives.org. The continued health of Vermont’s forests and urban trees depends on you.

USDA RELEASES New USDA Hardiness Zone Map

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) unveiled its new Plant Hardiness Zone Map in an event hosted at the U.S. National Arboretum on Jan. 25, 2012. The map is an important tool for the country’s estimated 80 million gardeners, and those who grow and breed plants for them. In addition, many others need hardiness zone information, including agencies such as the USDA Risk Management Agency, which uses the plant hardiness zone designations to set some crop insurance standards. Scientists also use the plant hardiness zones as a data layer in many research models such as modeling the spread of exotic weeds and insects.
This year’s Industry Award winners were presented at Green Works annual winter meeting on February 15, 2012. This program is in its third year and continues to evolve as we get feedback from the participants and the panel of judges. This year the judges added a new award category called “Merit” to award projects they felt deserving. The winning categories are: Grand Honor- the highest award, Exceeds Excellence, the mid-level award, and Merit, the third award.

We had two Grand Honor awards this year: Julie Moir Messervy Design Studio, Saxtons River, VT in Commercial Design and Distinctive Landscaping, Charlotte, VT in Residential Large Scale Build.

We had four Exceeds Excellence awards: Distinctive Landscaping, Charlotte, VT in Large Scale Residential Design, Garden Arts Company, Danby, VT in Commercial Management, Landshapes, Richmond, VT in Special Projects and Tree Works, Montpelier, VT in Special Projects.

There were three Merit awards: Church Hill Landscapes, Charlotte, VT in Small Scale Residential Build, Distinctive Landscaping, Charlotte, VT in Small Scale Residential Design, and Landshapes, Richmond, VT in Commercial Build.

We received 14 submissions and awarded 9 of them. We assembled a panel of 6 professionals to review and judge the entries. They spent a full day together, looking at slides and reviewing the information submitted with each project. Any identifying information on the entries was omitted so the judging could be “blind” and objective. If one of the judges recognized a project and felt they couldn’t be objective, they were asked to recuse themselves. The judges included 2 landscape architects, 2 professional horticulturists/garden designers and 2 educators. We don’t reveal the names of our judges.

It’s important to point out that all the projects entered this year were of high caliber. The judges had their work cut out for them and it’s truly a difficult task to narrow down the list. A big thank you to all who submitted and please, keep on submitting. We’d like to receive many more entries; we know there’s a lot of great work being done by our members and each year we get a few more first-time entries. You can’t be awarded if you don’t enter, but entering isn’t a guarantee of an award either. Many of us walk away from competitions empty-handed, but it’s always a good learning experience and it helps build your portfolio.

A big thank-you to our judges and to all the participants! Keep track of your projects this year, take lots of photos, visit older projects and submit for next year’s awards! To see the award-sinning projects visit the Green Works website.

Please view the winning project photos on the cover and back inside cover of this issue. You can also view a slide show of the winning projects on our website at www.greenworksvermont.org.

Ed Burke, Industry Awards Committee Chair
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How to Use Your Trade Association Membership to Differentiate Your Company In the Mind of Your Prospects

by Mike Jeffries- President Rivers of Revenue, LLC

For the past 10 years I’ve worked with hundreds of home service contractors and I’m amazed that few, if any, take full advantage of their membership in a trade association or group in their marketing.

When a typical homeowner/prospect is looking for a contractor they really don’t know how to evaluate each company versus their competitors. They don’t know what questions to ask or if they do know what questions to ask, they don’t know what the answers should be.

Here’s what we’ve found after surveying and talking to hundreds and hundreds of homeowners. Please keep in mind that prospects always want to know “what’s in it for me” or “why would this be important in my decision”.

There are 3 general areas that they want information about you and your company:

• Reputation and Stability of Your Company
• Experience With a Project Like Theirs Follow Up and Customer Service

Armed with this knowledge you can now use your membership to help position your company as the obvious choice to do business with. Virtually all of our clients are members of their trade association. If our clients are not members, we strongly recommend that they join. BTW - Most of the “good guys” in each industry belong to their trade association.

The problem is that many contractors don’t take the time to explain to their prospect what their membership means to them. They simply put the logo on their marketing, ads or website and leave it at that. Remember, the homeowner has no idea what that logo represents, so part of your job is to teach them.

For Example:

It’s estimated that 3 to 5% of all contractors belong to a professional association for their industry. For many industries the % is a lot less.

What else could you teach your prospective buyer about this? How about:

• Your code of ethics
• Ongoing industry training in best practices
• Guidance in complying with new regulations and more

What if you hold or have held an officer or board member position? People like to know that you are responsible and that you take an active role in your association.

What professional certifications do you hold?

The number of professionals with certifications is even smaller than those that belong to an association. In most industries it is far less than 1%.

Again – don’t just tell your prospects that you have the certification – explain the amount of time involved to get it, what % of your competitors hold it and what additional skills it gave you and how that will help the prospect get the service and results they really want.

Keep in mind that the real problem is most buyers are too embarrassed to ask questions about your membership. Many are afraid that this might make them look “dumb”. It is easier for them to think “he or she seems nice so they must be honest too.”

Your goal is to never lose a prospect to a competitor that doesn’t take advantage of all the benefits of belonging to your trade association. Not even one. You need to educate your prospects about the benefits of hiring you and by doing that they will realize the risks in hiring someone that is not a member.

You can contact Mike Jeffries at Mike@ClosingSuccessSystem.com or visit www.ClosingSuccessSystem.com

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Vermont - Legislative Update

by Dan Redondo, Green Works Legislative Committee Chair

In 2011, the Vermont legislature studied legislation (H.409) to add plant species to the Quarantine List as noxious weeds. The bill was sent to the House Committee on Agriculture, where it remained without action, as the Agency of Agriculture, Food, and Markets testified that they would add the target species (Norway maple, Common Barberry, Japanese Barberry, Winged Euonymus, and Amur Maple) in 2011, which they initiated in December 2011 via publication of an amended draft quarantine rule. The rule is anticipated to be finalized in 2012.

The invasive species bill (H.409) remains in front of the House Committee on Agriculture, with no immediate action planned. However, the bill may be revised to eliminate reference to invasive plants, and instead focus on making the Vermont Invasive and Exotic Plant Committee an appointed (either by the Governor or by the Agency of Agriculture) committee responsible for preparing an annual list of recommendations for additions/deletions to the Quarantine List. The nursery and landscape industry would have a permanent seat on this committee. At this time, changes to H.409 have only been discussed informally and official revisions have not been made to the bill.

Green Works strongly encourages its members to adhere to the tenant of “Right Place, Right Plant.” Factors such as seeding vigor and the aggressiveness of rhizomatous reproduction should be considered alongside traditional factors such as soil type, soil moisture, color of flower and plant parts. Green Works members should look to adjacent New England states to learn what plant species are on their state noxious weed and watch lists and consider potential ramifications to the environment if a plant were to become invasive in the future. Green Works will continue to participate as a member of the VIECP and update our membership on further developments with this proposed bill or any other bills.
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As you may have been reading in the papers, UVM is in the process of replacing their President, interviewing 5 candidates this winter. John Bramley is back serving as interim president, having served in the past as Provost and originally from the CALS Animal Science department. Overall, and relative to most other land grant universities, UVM and Extension seem to be in relatively stable times (keep your fingers crossed). Extension is even currently in the process of filling 4 vacant positions (including a new one, at least for recent times, in ag engineering).

In our PSS department, I’m glad we’re able to host committees and meetings of your association on campus and in our wonderful Jeffords Hall. Some of the main course offerings this semester include The Bugs Life (Lewins, with 155 students), Plant Propagation (Starrett), Ecological Landscape Design (Hurley), Greenhouse Operations (Armstrong), Soil Fertility (Gorres), Painting Botanicals (Neroni), Biological Control (Chen), Soil and Water Pollution (Ross), and Permaculture (Morris).

As of writing this I’ve just put up my fourth course online through Continuing Education, this one on Home Vegetable Growing (Dr. Chen teaches one on Organic Farm Planning). For the 15 slots I currently have 35 signed up, with 92 students among my other courses on herbaceous plants that I teach each semester. These are totally online, self-paced, so available to anyone through Continuing Education. Also I offer the Herbaceous Garden Plants as always as a non-credit (much less expensive) option, with discount to industry members and master gardeners, which you can check out on my website (perrysperennials.info). This coming fall I plan to offer a new course on Home Fruit Growing, based on my book just published.

Finally after two years of intense periods lost to all else for me, the Fruit Gardener’s Bible is available in both soft and hard cover. This is a revision of Lewis Hill’s Fruits and Berries for the Home Garden (2nd ed. 1992), but is basically a new book being 4-color throughout (the previous was black and white), larger format, over 300 pages, and with probably 95% different and updated content.

As much as possible and the publisher permitted, I tried to retain Lewis’ style and stories. It amazes me that in the age before the internet, that Lewis put together such a good reference in the previous edition. Not only did I get back up to speed on fruits and learn much on them, but equally learned many lessons on dealing with a publisher and writing a book, lessons I’ll be glad to share with anyone contemplating such a project. You can find more on the book, and much more than was possible to include, on my new website (homefruitgrowing.info).

Planning is underway for the All-America Selections display garden once again at Burlington’s Waterfront, made possible in part by your association. List of plants and ratings (end of the season) are available online along with some photos (perrysperennials.info/aaswp.html). This winter I’ve continued, thanks again in part to support from your association, controlled freezing studies on perennials. This year these included effects of fall acclimation (how much is needed after our late and warm fall), and killing levels for 7 perennials including three echinacea. This coming year, field trials will continue with coralbells (90 cultivars), echinacea (over 60 cultivars), dozens of other perennials from several international firms, as well as a new study. This will be the first of 4 years as part of a National Ornamental Grass Trials, one of 12 field sites nationwide (the other in the Northeast being Longwood Gardens), coordinated by Dr. Mary Meyer from the University of Minnesota. This trial is planned to include 6 Schizachyrium and 19 Panicum cultivars with replicates at each site.

More details on all these perennial trials and research, and results as available, will be posted on my website (perrysperennials.info/susres.htm). There you can also find all the gory science details of just how we do our winter freezing studies, in a December article by my former grad student Sarah Kingsley-Richards, published in the Journal of Environmental Horticulture.

As you read this, I hope I will have seen some of you at New England Grows this year in Boston. As I will be coming onto their education committee to plan next year’s presentations this April, please let me know if you have any suggestions for speakers you’d like to hear there. If growing or selling or landscaping with perennials, make note of the Perennial Plant Association Symposium to be held this year in Boston, July 4-10 (www.perennialplant.org).
Program Overview: We will review the Pesticide Applicator Training Manual and then offer the appropriate certification exam. Those wanting to become a certified private applicator will be able to take the private core exam. Those wanting to become a certified commercial/non-commercial applicator may take the commercial core exam. (Lunch can be purchased at the VTC cafeteria or BYO).

Study Materials: Manuals MUST be purchased and studied ahead of time by contacting Matthew Wood at 802-828-3482 or matthew.wood@state.vt.us. To look at the study materials for the course go to http://pss.uvm.edu/pesp.

Registration: Please register for attendance before April 6 by sending in a check for $15.00 made out to 'UVM' to: Ann Hazelrigg, University of Vermont, Plant and Soil Science Department, 63 Carrigan Drive, Burlington, VT 05405.

After April 6, the price will be $20.00. Space is limited to the first 50 registered.

Questions? Contact Ann Hazelrigg at 656-0493 or ann.hazelrigg@uvm.edu.

Directions to Vermont Technical College and Red Schoolhouse: From I-89, take Exit 4, Randolph exit; from Route 14, take Route 66 to Randolph Center. Go up the hill toward Randolph Center (about 3/4 mile), and turn right on Main Street to south campus and the Red Schoolhouse.
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John Padua
991 Tyler Bridge Road, Bristol, VT 05443
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In November Don and Lela Avery welcomed the Hardy Plant Club to their display gardens at Cady’s Falls Nursery to see the larches (Larix spp.) in their late fall color. Larches turn a brilliant gold when the season and weather cooperate. Don wasn’t too pleased with the display, but I really enjoyed seeing his garden when the deciduous trees are reduced to silhouettes and the conifers stand out against the brown and gray tones of late fall. The larches were beautiful too—maybe not their best color this year, but nice just the same.

When other folks had left, Don gave me a tour: the gardens, the growing beds, the greenhouse, the barn: the whole shebang. Afterwards, we sat down for a long chat at their kitchen table that overlooks the garden. Sharing freshly made frittata, soup, and brownies— all from the wood stove and Lela’s handiwork, we talked horticulture and about some of the people in it.

I gained a lot of insight that long afternoon—about the passion that drives Don and Lela, and about my own direction and passions. I was feeling excited! It was dark when I left and I had a song in my heart.

I was inspired that day and decided some things in my Rocky Dale world would have to change. For the last 5 or 6 years, we’ve managed a marginally successful “Christmas Season” at Rocky Dale—selling wreaths, greens, ornaments, etc. While many people enjoyed our product and presence during the Holidays, it wasn’t really fulfilling for me and it certainly wasn’t something I was passionate about. Deciding to give that up freed me to focus on the things I love to do and the things I do well. When I shut that door, I was able to open others.

I’m not much of a cold weather person— the depths of winter don’t call me outside to prune my deciduous trees, even if it’s the right time to do it. I usually save that for March, but by then the spring chores for opening the nursery stack up and I don’t do as much pruning as I hoped to. Now that I was on Christmas vacation, I could start pruning!

Don talked about how larches rebound so nicely from heavy pruning. I’ve had an itch to cut back the large larches (Larix decidua ‘Pendula’) on the arbor at Rocky Dale for many years but I never had gotten to it. It took me three days, but when I finished, I had turned it into a shadow of its former self. Most of the wood was dead. One year’s growth grew over the top of the previous year’s and had created a pile of twigs. Hiding underneath the “brush pile” was an elegant structure achieved through 30 years growth, now exposed.

Feeling pretty pumped up by that experience I moved on to the contorted beech (Fagus sylvatica ‘Tortuosa’), which sits at the entry to the garden. This tree is about 12 feet wide and 8 feet tall, 30 years old and heavily branched. The main trunks are thick and twisted with finer branches reaching out in a strong horizontal habit. Like the contorted Hazelnut (Harry Lauder’s Walking Stick), winter is the best time to view such a tree without its leaves blocking the view of the contorted branches. Winter is also the best time to prune it: when you can see the structure and make good decisions on what to cut.

This is a one-of-a-kind tree. I don’t know if there’s even another one in Vermont this size. I observed this tree for a couple of days, taking note of its balance, where the visual weight was and how best to open it up without destroying its graceful habit. I started slowly with smaller branches, remembering “you can take it off, but you can’t put it back on”. There are many branches I removed one length at a time, or I went from one crotch to the next. Sometimes the whole branch from the main trunk wound up coming off, but it took several steps to get there. Once I got the weight evenly distributed and created a balanced and proportioned silhouette, I moved into “opening up” the crown by removing the clutter from the inside first and then finishing from the outside.

In pruning I always find my pruners ready to cut a substantial branch after I’ve been through this process, and more often than not I tell myself, “that’s for next year”, and leave it be. By removing too much at one time I put the tree into stress the next spring.

I’ve moved on to some lesser trees and may even bear the cold to continue this through the winter: I have a lot of special trees and March will be here before I know it.

So I’ve achieved a few things so far: In addition to taking my time with a methodical pruning, I’ve had a chance to visit family in Manhattan and closely inspect the fabulous High Line Park. I’ve been able to measure a couple of design projects before snowfall. These are the things I’m passionate about, and these are the doors that have opened.

My winding down season has been great! The weather was mostly mild, grasses stood tall for a long time and I got to watch the framework of the gardens come to life as all the herbaceous material dried up and flattened.

I love this about winter— it’s all about spatial arrangement and architecture, framing and patterns- and it’s a great time to study and discover your landscape. It’s also a good time to bond with your trees. It’s early winter now, and when people ask, “What do you do in winter?” I reply, “I slow down to 40 hours a week!”

I’ll be designing gardens, reviewing all the fabulous plants with Amy for the 2012 catalog, attending Green Works events, swapping stories with colleagues and attending to my duties as a board member. Best of all, I’ll be observing the garden, pondering changes, and appreciating every nuance.

Enjoy the slow time - it is almost over!
As 2011 has drawn to a close, I hope we have all taken the time to reflect and hopefully recover from the excitement of 2011.

Most of you are probably aware that the Agency of Agriculture, Plant Industry Section lost the lab and office space in Waterbury during Tropical Storm Irene and the associated flooding in Waterbury. Jon Turmel, Emilie Inoue and I all had office and laboratory space in that building, as did the Agency chemists, microbiologists, and laboratory supervisory and support staff, as well as the Weights and Measures section. I am pleased to report that all of us have been successfully relocated to either the UVM campus (Terrill Hall) or to 322 Industrial Lane, in Berlin. Jon and I are permanently assigned to the Berlin location, and Emilie is splitting her time between UVM and Berlin. Our contact information remains the same for email and postal mailing purposes, but our new delivery address (UPS, Fedex) is:

Plant Industry Section
322 Industrial Lane
Berlin, VT 05641

My new telephone number is (802) 828-1317, and Jon can be reached at -1319.

We will remain at this address for the foreseeable future, at least well into 2012, and perhaps longer. We’re very pleased with the space (lots of room, quiet, easy access to Montpelier and the interstate), but miss the hustle and bustle of the old lab and Waterbury complex. If you are in the Berlin area, stop in, and we’ll give you the nickel tour.

Weed Rule Amendments

It has finally happened, for better or worse. As I have been threatening to do for almost as long as I have been with the Agency, the Noxious Weed Rule has been re-opened. By the time you read this, the public comment period will likely have closed, but if I have done my job, everyone has had ample opportunity to comment on the proposed listing of Norway maple, Burning bush, Barberry, Amur maple, Yellow flag iris and Brittle waternymph. In case this goes to press in time, the maples, Burning bush, Barberry, Amur maple, Yellow flag iris and Brittle waternymph. In case this goes to press in time, the

Spores produced by the fruiting bodies include teliospores, capable of surviving for extended periods on infected leaves within the pustules mentioned previously, and basidiospores, which are comparatively short-lived (only an hour or so, in ideal conditions, and much less if conditions are more hostile), and are released during periods of high humidity (95 to 100%), and moderately cool (40 to 75 degrees) temperatures. Basidiospores spread to new sites via wind, or on clothing, hands, and tools used by workers. Infection requires temperatures

continued on page 16
optimally between 63 and 75 degrees F, and the presence of surface water on the leaves or stems. Infection may take as little as two hours given optimal conditions. After infection, the pathogen needs at least five days to reach the symptomatic and reproductive stages, but may take considerably longer (up to three weeks) to display symptoms, complicating inspection and control efforts somewhat. This extended latency can prevent detection and interception of infected cuttings, as apparently healthy material can slip by inspectors and producers in the production areas and later become symptomatic after delivery to finishing or retail operations.

Management of CWR in Vermont is generally preventative in nature, but there are acceptable curative practices and registered fungicides available. Prevention is best accomplished through regular growing season inspections and application of preventative fungicides from arrival of cuttings to final finishing in the field and shipment to retail customers. Prevention is also helped through sound cultural and physical practices, including sourcing cuttings from reputable producers, maintaining consistent airflow throughout the crop to aid in lowered relative humidity and minimal surface moisture on the plants, removal of plant debris from production areas, regular and disciplined scouting, and by not overwintering mother plants in greenhouses known to have had CWR problems.

Preventative fungicides labeled for CWR include the chlorothalonil and axoxystrobin formulations, and myclobutanil containing products are recommended as part of a curative program, should CWR appear in your production areas. Of course, if you suspect CWR, as it is a Federally regulated pest, you are obligated to contact USDA or us here at the Agency for diagnostic and management guidelines, especially if you are engaged in interstate or international shipment of your plants. If CWR is confirmed on your crop, we will initiate isolation and quarantine actions to mitigate the problem, ensure compliance with the regulation, and minimize the impact to your bottom line as best as we are able.

CWR is not an especially difficult pest to control and manage, given adequate time to identify and treat the problem. Although the involvement of the USDA is intimidating, and may seem out of proportion to the potential threat the disease poses to our agricultural economy generally, early scouting and persistent efforts pay off in the end, with the rewards of beautiful and healthy chrysanthemums in your fields and shops come September.
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Industry Calendar

March 29, 2012
6th Annual Vermont Organics Recycling Summit
Vermont Technical College
Randolph Center, VT  *  802.277.3360, ext. 102
www.regonline.com/VORS2012

March 31, 2012  -  1-3pm
Green Works Winter Workshop
Grafting Conifers
Cady’s Falls Nursery  *  Morrisville, VT.
802.425.5117*  www.greenworksvermont.org

April 18, 2012  -  9am-5pm
Vermont Pesticide & Certification Review and Exam
Vermont Technical College  *  Randolph Center, VT
Contact Ann Hazelrigg @656-0493 or ann.hazelrigg@uvm.edu.

July 4-10, 2012
Perennial Plant Symposium
Boston Park Plaza Hotel  *  Boston, MA
614.771.8431  *  ppa@perennialplant.org
www.perennialplant.org

August 23, 2012
Green Works Summer Meeting & Trade Show
Horsford Gardens & Nursery
Charlotte, VT
802.425.5117*  www.greenworksvermont.org

boxwood blight update

By Joe Bischoff, ANLA, and Marc Teffeau, HRI

Last fall a new and invasive plant pathogen called boxwood blight (Cylindrocladium pseudonaviculatum; C. buxicolor is a synonym) was confirmed for the first time in the United States. Since then the disease has been confirmed in nine states (CT, MA, RI, NY, PA, MD, VA, NC, OR) and one Canadian province (BC). As with any new plant pest, there are more questions than answers.

In response, the Horticultural Research Institute (HRI) has announced the creation of the Emerging Issues and Technology Projects Box Blight Fund (EITPBBF). In addition, the HRI Board of Trustees has adopted boxwood blight as a major topic for additional research. HRI is working to leverage industry and other sources of funding quickly, without wasteful fragmentation and duplication.

The regulatory response of USDA-APHIS and state officials regarding Boxwood Blight is still unclear. The American Nursery and Landscape Association (ANLA) and HRI are working with federal, state, university, and industry collaborators to coordinate a now-, near-, and long-term approach to deal with this new problematic pathogen. This approach is critically important whether APHIS or states decide to take regulatory steps or not. HRI and ANLA seek to encourage and support the development of programs, procedures, and practices to:

• Identify the best and most efficient cultural practices for preventing infection and spread.
• Enable proactive sampling and testing to identify possible field infections.
• Create, validate, and deploy rapid immunological and/or DNA based testing tools.
• Eliminate or manage the disease in nurseries and landscapes.

Boxwood blight is a significant disease that we will likely be battling for years to come. Identifying the appropriate action items and goals now is vital to the long term health of boxwood, an important crop and iconic landscape plant, in our industry. ANLA and HRI are dedicated to engaging partners and coordinating a response that is efficient in both time and resources.

Here are some sources for further information. The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station factsheet offers a good overview and identification information. Factsheets from Oregon State University Extension and North Carolina State University offer extensive tips on cultural and chemical control and best practices. “Science geeks” can find more detailed and technical scientific information from Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management and ARS-USDA.

November 7-8, 2012
Northeast Greenhouse Conference & Expo
DCU Center  *  Worcester, MA
www.negreenhouse.org

March 1-3, 2013
Vermont Flower Show
Champlain Valley Exposition
Essex Junction, VT
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