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by Mike Bader, Buyer

Spectacular outdoor containers overflowing with a variety of plants are one of the hottest trends in gardening today. Creating extraordinary plant combinations in the home using indoor plants has never been easier. In fact, plants like to be grouped together because they give off water vapor, which makes the surrounding air more humid, providing them with a happy growing environment. Our houseplant greenhouses receive fresh shipments weekly, making your design possibilities almost endless.

In years past, flowering plants were used as the central feature of container gardens, but more of our designs use foliage plants which survive indoors longer and can adapt to partially shaded rooms. My favorite combinations really pack in the plants using four basic design functions: size, color, leaf shape and form.

While browsing through our warm and cozy greenhouses, begin your design with an eye-catching upright plant that will add some height to your creation. Among the easiest to grow are dracaenas, often resembling palms with arching leaves and bare, woody stems. Their striking leaves are usually long and striped with various combinations of white, cream, yellow, red and several shades of green. Most of us are familiar with the popular *Dracaena marginata* or dragon palm, but Behnke's carries several new introductions as well. Another favorite of mine is the *Ficus elastica* or rubber plant. The glossy leaves are large and leathery with prominent midribs and pointed tips. The newer cultivars have a more compact growth habit and colored

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Behnke's has everything you need to create beautiful containers — and new plants arrive weekly.

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HOURS

Garden Center hours change seasonally. For the most current information, please consult our website, www.behnkes.com or call specific store locations at the numbers listed below.

BEHNKE'S AT BELTSVILLE

11300 Baltimore Ave. (U.S.1)
Beltsville, MD 20705
Two miles north of
Capital Beltway Exit 25
(same exit as Ikea).
301-937-1100

**Landscape Division
301-937-1100 ext. 6733**

BEHNKE'S AT POTOMAC

9545 River Road
Potomac, MD 20854
Two miles north of the
Capital Beltway on River Road.
301-983-9200
Florist 301-983-4400



Contain your Enthusiasm, from page 1

leaf markings of green, gray-green, creamy yellow, white, pink and burgundy.

Essential for adding surprise and color to your combinations, accent plants often feature bold foliage. Leaves that are variegated or exhibit unusual color, such as burgundy or chartreuse, are especially effective. *Codiaeum variegatum*, or croton, has magnificent leaves in shades of yellow, orange, pink, red and dark green. Their colorful foliage can be long and thin, broad and rounded, straight or even twisted. For those of you who are seduced by a plant's flowers (myself included), bury an empty plastic pot in your container, either a 5 inch or 7 inch depending on the size of your creation. Most of our blooming plants are available in 4-inch or 6-inch sizes and you can insert your favorites into the empty pot without actually planting in the soil. After they have finished flowering you can easily replace them with another. We currently have blooming African violets, azaleas, begonias, bromeliads, chrysanthemums, cyclamens, kalanchoes and miniature roses. In February spring bulbs begin to arrive along with primulas and hydrangeas.

Using a variety of leaf shapes and sizes adds excitement and interest to your planting combination. Look for contrasting shapes and textures to bring life into your design. Here is where I have some fun using several smaller plants as fillers. As their name suggests, these plants fill in the combination, but more importantly, they separate the bolder participants in the container. There are just too many to mention, but some of my favorites include asparagus fern, rex begonia, spider plant, polka dot plant, peperomia, aluminum plant, fittonia, and several types of table ferns.

The final selection for your design should include a trailing plant or two. These plants provide much of the charm to your plant combinations while spilling over the top of the container or mingling among other container inhabitants. There are many types of English ivy and pothos that are colorful and easy to grow. You can also choose from creeping fig, baby tears, purple heart, strawberry begonia, Swedish ivy, and just about any plant you see growing in a hanging basket.

Let's not forget to mention the new truckload shipments of pottery arriving each month. I am forever in search of interesting pots, whether they are hand-painted by a local artist or hand thrown and painted in a far away land. You can choose from a wide variety of sizes, shapes and style variations, designed especially for the home or office. Behnkes carries contemporary ceramics, terra cotta, China bowls, Italian or classic cylinders, gloss, matte, or faux finishes, and specialty containers for orchids, bonsai, cactus, and succulents.

I recommend Miracle-Gro potting soils and fertilizers to ensure your gardening success. Our Behnke designers can also assist in selecting containers and foliage to match your light, favorite colors, style requirements, and your enthusiasm! □



This outdoor mixed container of a banana plant with annuals shows an interesting design approach.



From the Top

by Mike Behnke, President and CEO, Behnke Nurseries

If you squint a bit, you can see Spring peeking back at you from around the corner. All indications are that it will be a great year for gardeners at Behnke Nurseries.

We have been growing at our new nursery in Lothian, MD for over a year now, and if our poinsettia crop from last month is any indication, the quality of our plants for 2007 will be unmatched.

We'll continue to bring you the new, as well as the tried and true. Our buyers and growers are continually evaluating new cultivars, and 2007 promises to reveal plants that you are unlikely to see elsewhere. We are particularly proud of our discovery of the new *Heuchera 'Midnight Rose,'* which is being released world-wide by Terra Nova Nurseries.

We want your visit to our garden centers to be as pleasant as possible. To make checkout faster, we have installed new cash registers with a number of features that will speed you through our lines. Our "Preferred Customer Card" holders will continue to save 10% off regular plant prices every time they shop (visit www.behnkes.com for more information). And, we have another excellent series of free lectures for you

this Winter at our Beltsville garden center (see pages 4 and 5).

We are working to meet your "environmental expectations." Mike Bader, our hardgoods buyer, is broadening our offerings of organic garden-problem solutions. He will write more about this in the next issue of *GardeNews*. We continue to reduce our sales of invasive ornamental plants and provide alternatives. My cousin, John Peter Thompson, serves on the federal government's National Invasive Species Advisory Committee, and lectures on invasive issues around the country. We are once again accepting your plastic pots and flats for recycling. Our 'Baysafe' program continues to highlight our plant offerings that are native to Maryland.

Enjoy your newsletter; come and visit us. Whether you need plants, fresh flowers, gardening supplies, or landscape design and installation services, we'd like to see Behnke Nurseries at the top of your "to-do" list. Thank you for trusting us with your gardens.

A final word to our employees. On behalf of the Behnke family, I'd like to thank all of you who have worked so hard through the trying times the last few years. You are the heart and soul of our business. Your love of plants and gardening always shines through. May your gardens always blossom. □

Tips for Planning Your Landscape

by Christy Planinsek, Landscape Design Department Manager

Visit our display at the
Washington Home & Garden Show
March 8 - 11!

"How can I beautify my yard?" I am asked this very general question often, and it is difficult to answer. There are many variables in do-it-yourself landscaping, such as: budget; skills; personal style; how you will be using your yard; and how much time you can spend maintaining it. Here are some general guidelines that I can recommend for everyone.

- Evaluate the Conditions in Your Yard:** Soil, sun light and moisture are key requirements for plant survival and should always be considered before starting a project.
- Do Your Research:** Find out which plants are hardy in your region and can survive in the site conditions of your yard. Learn as much as you can about the plants you select.
- Create Year Round Interest:** Include trees and shrubs flowering through the spring and summer, colorful fall foliage and dynamic winter structure. This provides interest in all 4 seasons.
- Use Layering:** Plant your beds in rows of 3 with the tallest plants in the back, the next tallest in the middle and the shortest in the front. This creates a sense of depth.
- Unify Your Yard:** Repeat the same plants in different areas of the yard. This gives a feeling of continuity to the site.
- Group Plants:** Plant in groups of 3 or more; only specimen trees and shrubs should be planted individually.
- Use Evergreens for Structure:** Deciduous plants provide colorful blooms and foliage but evergreens provide additional texture and winter interest.
- Space Plants Properly:** Research the mature size of a plant before you put it in your landscape.
- Maintenance:** Consider how much time you can devote to your garden every week and plant accordingly. There is no such thing as a maintenance free plant; however, there are slower growing, drought tolerant and pest resistant plants available.
- Consult a Landscape Designer:** If you don't have the time or the interest to design your yard, professional help is available. A landscape designer can guide you through the planning process and provide you with a design that is ready to install.

For professional help with your landscape, including onsite consultations, designs and landscape installations, call Behnke's Landscape Division at 240-473-6733.

Gardening Seminars at Behnke

Winter Interest Shrubs: Blooms, Berries, Bark and Form

Saturday, February 3, 10 AM

Alex Dencker, Behnke Nurseries at Beltsville Store Manager

Got the Winter Blahs? Our manager discusses daphnes, hollies, witch hazels, and other winter interest shrubs to get you through the gray days of winter.

Divide and Conquer: Dividing Perennials

Saturday, February 3, 1 PM

Terri Poindexter, Behnke Nurseries Perennial Specialist

The easiest way to fill space in your garden (besides buying plants!) is to divide existing clumps of perennials.

Creating a Terrarium

Sunday, February 4, 1 PM

Gary Ingram, Behnke Nurseries at Potomac Store Manager

Gary has been creating "glass-enclosed microcosms since I was a kid." Learn how to make a terrarium that lasts. A drawing will be held for the terrarium created during the lecture.

Perennial Companions for Daylilies

Saturday, February 10, 10 AM

Randy Best and Larry Hurley, Behnke Nurseries Staff

Daylilies fit into any garden. This talk highlights perennials that, with their foliage, flowers or blooming time go particularly well with daylilies.

Note: All are welcome to attend an open meeting of the National Capital Daylily Society at 9 AM, immediately preceding the lecture.

White Gardens, Silver Gardens and Moon Gardens

Saturday, February 10, 1 PM

Jill Gonzalez and Marian Parsley, Behnke Nurseries Staff

Whether shimmering in the sun or fragrantly glowing under the moon, white gardens are always elegant. Discover the best choices for your own white garden.

A Local Botanical Wonder: The Potomac River Gorge

Sunday, February 11, 1 PM

Mary Travaglini, The Nature Conservancy

The Potomac Gorge is a national treasure. The Potomac Gorge Habitat Restoration Manager highlights rare native plant communities and the problems caused by invasive viburnums and other escapes from horticulture.

Orchids in the Home

Saturday, February 17, 10 AM

Carol Allen, Orchid Expert

Orchids made easy by a popular speaker. Don't shy away from these exotic plants! Many types of orchids will be discussed, so bring your questions.

WORKSHOP: Orchid Repotting

\$10.00

Saturday, February 17, 1 PM to 4 PM

Carol Allen, Orchid Expert

Carol will demonstrate repotting techniques for various types of orchids. Bring one orchid to repot. Fee covers potting media and a new 10-inch or smaller plastic pot. Pre-registration required. Please call 301-937-1100.

Purple Loosestrife: A Beautiful Menace

Sunday, February 18, 1 PM

Kerrie Kyde, Invasive Plants Coordinator, MD Dept of Natural Resources

Although purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*) is a beautiful garden plant, it can be a horticultural thug in natural wetlands, threatening species of already endangered plants and animals and disrupting wetland ecosystems.

Alternatives to Invasive Plants: Good for Your Garden

Saturday, February 24, 10 AM

John Peter Thompson and Larry Hurley, Behnke Nurseries Staff

We know that some invasive ornamentals escape into the environment, but what are good alternatives for Bradford pear and burning bush? We'll share our recommendations.

New Plant Forum: Hot New Garden Ornamentals

Saturday, February 24, 1 PM

Larry Hurley, Alfred Millard and Marian Parsley, Behnke Nurseries Staff

See what Behnke Nurseries buyers consider to be the best of the new plants for this season in the Perennial, Woody Plant and Annuals Departments.

Eww Dirt! Getting Kids Excited about Gardening

Sunday, February 25, 1 PM

Annie Ceccarini, Horticulturist, Smithsonian Institution

Ms. Ceccarini shares her own experiences working with kids at the Smithsonian and describes a few of her favorite activities to engage young gardeners. A question and discussion period will follow her talk.

Turfs Up! Lawn Care

Saturday, March 3, 10 AM

John Peter Thompson, Behnke Nurseries Staff

Learn why most of your lawn maintenance chores are best done in the fall.

Soils: The Dirty Details

Saturday, March 3, 1 PM

Jon Traunfeld, University of Maryland

The key to a good garden is good soil. Learn how to improve your soil for a healthier, more vigorous garden.

Great Shrubs to Extend the Seasons

Sunday, March 4, 1 PM

Randy Best, Behnke Staff

Azaleas aren't the only blooming shrubs! Randy presents colorful shrubs to take your sunny garden through summer and fall.

Keeping Ahead of the Jones's: Notes From A Plant Collector

Saturday, March 10, 10 AM

Jim Dronenburg, Frequent Contributor to The Washington Gardener

From "Never Heard of It" to "I Thought That Wouldn't Grow Here," Jim shares his experiences amongst the gardening avant garde.



Behnke's Beltsville: Winter 2007

Blooming Iris 11 Months a Year

Saturday, March 10, 1 PM

Ginny Spoon, Winterberry Gardens

An iris expert shows you the many species and cultivars of iris, and how their colorful display can enliven your garden nearly year 'round with little effort on your part.

Sweet Herbal Recipes—Not Just Desserts

Sunday, March 11, 1 PM to 2:30 PM

Susan Belsinger, Garden and Culinary Author

Drawing from her recent book, *Sweet Herbal Recipes—Not Just Desserts*, Susan demonstrates three recipes using seasonal herbs. Sample the recipes and learn how herbs can enliven your kitchen creations. Book signing to follow talk.

Container Gardening

Saturday, March 17, 10 AM

Eric Morrison, Horticulturist

Always a popular speaker, Eric returns to share the secrets of great container garden combinations. You'll love his fresh approach to designing with plants.

Hydrangeas and Their Relatives

Saturday, March 17, 1 PM

Carole Bordelon, Horticulturist, US National Arboretum

Ever since *Hydrangea 'Endless Summer'* appeared several years ago, hydrangeas have been "hot." Discover the best species and cultivars available, as well as their garden-worthy kin.

Nine Months of Color in the Shade Garden

Sunday, March 18, 1 PM

Randy Best, Behnke Staff, "Mr. Hosta"

The shade garden tends to settle down after the 4th of July. Learn how to keep the garden looking fresh with bold foliage, fragrant hostas, late blooming toad lilies, and other season extenders.

Beyond the Tidal Basin — Exploring the Diversity of Flowering Cherry and Other Trees at the U.S. National Arboretum

Saturday, March 24, 10 AM

Margaret Pooler, Research Geneticist, US National Arboretum

Renowned ornamental plant breeder Margaret Pooler will explore the diversity of ornamental cherry species and describe how breeding efforts at the National Arboretum are capturing this diversity to create new varieties of ornamental cherries.

Container Planting Through the Seasons

Saturday, March 24, 1 PM

Muffin Evander, Cultivated Designs

Learn to make year-round mixed container plantings using a base of woody plants and perennials, changing the tone through the seasons with accents of annuals.

Deer Resistance: Plants, Repellents, Fencing

Sunday, March 25, 1 PM

Andre Viette, Nurseryman, Author and Radio Personality

Andre shares his years of experience as a nurseryman and gardener discouraging deer. Learn the most resistant perennials, evergreens, shrubs and trees, as well as the most effective repellent and fencing strategies. Book signing to follow talk.

Pruning Matters: The Formula for Pruning Mastery

Saturday, March 31, 10 AM

Fran West, Master Pruner

Pruning a tree or shrub can rejuvenate it and make it much more attractive. Simplifying a complex subject, Fran makes pruning easy for the homeowner. She will show her favorite pruning tools, and teach a few easy-to-apply rules for pruning decisions. DVD and field guide sales to follow.

Perennials I Can't Live Without

Saturday, March 31, 1 PM

David Culp, Sunny Border Nurseries, Horticulture Magazine

International perennial expert Dave Culp's short list for the best garden perennials for our area. Dave's garden is featured in national publications and he has appeared on Martha Stewart's TV show. He is the "father" of the Brandywine series of Hellebores.

Garden Photography

Sunday, April 1, 1 PM

William B. Folsom, Resident Photographer, Meadowlark Botanical Gardens

Tips to make great garden photos from a professional. Mr. Folsom has been taking photographs and teaching for over 30 years. Whether a film or digital photographer, you are bound to improve your technique.

Easter Lilies: Fragrance, Fable and Fact

Saturday, April 7, 10 AM

Larry Hurley, Behnke Nurseries Staff

Behnke Nurseries grows 12,000 Easter lilies each year. Learn about the history of the Easter lily, how it became a symbol of Easter, and how they are grown.

Native Designs for Natural Gardens

Saturday, April 7, 1 PM

Lauren Wheeler and Jenny Reed, Natural Resources Design, Inc.

Envision a beautiful and spiritual garden using native plants. Create a true sense of place in harmony with Maryland—a garden that welcomes wildlife and soothes the senses. That is the approach taken by Natural Resources Design. Explore their vision of gardening.

Presentations are free unless noted otherwise. Space is limited, please call to reserve your seat: 301-937-1100.

Workshops and seminars are held at our Beltsville, MD store: 11300 Baltimore Avenue (U.S. Route 1), 2 miles north of Capital Beltway Exit 25 (same exit as Ikea).



Potomac Artists Drive Away Winter Blues

by Gary S. Ingram, Manager, Behnke Nurseries at Potomac

Behnke's Potomac Garden Center in Spring is a place of barely controlled retail chaos. In Summer the pace slows to a lazy sun-baked rhythm of flowering perennials and hissing sprinklers. Fall brings mums, pumpkins and pansies and the promise of Christmas trees and poinsettias just around the corner.

But what do we do in the deep mid-Winter when the ground is frozen and gardeners aren't gardening? What do we do with 1,200 square feet of empty retail space that just a week ago was a bustling Christmas Shop?

Why, we hang an art show, of course!

For the second year in a row, Potomac Artists in Touch (PAinT) is filling our January lull with a stylish winter gallery showing of fine oil, acrylic, and water color paintings. The show opens Friday

the 12th of January with an invitation only evening reception and closes Sunday, January 28th. "We just love showing at Behnke's" says Cherry Dearie, founder of the group. "The space and lighting are just fantastic and we all have so much fun while we're there!"

PAinT's membership is culturally and stylistically diverse resulting in a rich breadth of work. For example, Cherry paints people—mostly children. She produces beautiful, dreamy canvases which deftly capture the personality of her subject. Terri Cunningham paints the land. She possesses an earthy, natural style that intuitively reproduces nature's undisturbed beauty. Clare Howard paints striking interpretive landscapes in startlingly vibrant strokes of color that leap off the canvas and

attack the eye. Yolanda Prinsloo's work captures traditional South African cultural icons with an almost photographic realism while Martha Lechner Spak softly coaxes light and form into warm formal still-life jewels reminiscent of the Dutch Masters. We could go on and on.

PAinT was founded in 2001 and formally incorporated as a non-profit in 2004. Their successful track record of charitable fundraising include a 2002 Art Calendar to benefit organizations such as *Cure Autism Now* and the *2003 St. Francis Art Show & Sale*. PAinT is probably best known for its 2004-2005 PONYMANIA public art project which succeeded in placing 10 unique, life-sized Painted Pony sculptures on display at locations throughout the greater Potomac, Maryland community. □

Join the Behnke Staff!

Consider joining the staff at Behnke Nurseries this Spring. You'll enjoy the interesting work environment, competitive salary, flexible schedules and great employee discount!

Openings for field staff, cashiers, drivers and more.

Attend a Job Fair to Learn More:

Saturday and Sunday, February 10 and 11 from 10 AM to 3 PM.

AND

Saturday and Sunday, February 17 and 18 from 10 AM to 3 PM.

Job Fairs will be held simultaneously at our Potomac and Beltsville stores.

Seasonal jobs may also be available at our production nursery at Lothian, MD. Call 240 473-6700 for more information.



Behnke's Sees "Eye to Eye" with the Prevention of Blindness Society of Metropolitan Washington

by Gary S. Ingram, Manager, Behnke Nurseries at Potomac

It all started with a squirrel nipping on a yew tree in Howard Silvers' Potomac Lyard. Mr. Silvers, a regular Behnke's customer, came to our Potomac garden center in search of a remedy. What resulted was the pairing of a venerable blindness prevention charity and a 75 year-old purveyor of quality plants and holiday cheer. Our association with the Prevention of Blindness Society of Metropolitan Washington came about because Mr. Silvers sits on the society's board of trustees. A gregarious intellectual gentleman, he quickly saw potential in a relationship between Behnke's and his charity. "Who better," he reasoned "to help champion the cause of healthy eyesight than a company which grows and sells some of the most beautiful flowers, trees and shrubs in the region?" Within days we were on the phone with the society's executive director Michelle Hartlove. A meeting later, we had a deal.

In 2006, The Behnke Nurseries Company donated \$1 from each purchase made at both retail locations between Nov. 15 and Dec. 24 to the Prevention of Blindness Society of Metropolitan Washington. Behnke's also hosted four sessions of free glaucoma screenings given by the society's volunteer optometrists at our garden centers. The screenings were surprisingly popular and tens of thousands of dollars were raised during the holiday season for the society.

We had so much fun and met so many great people, we can hardly wait to do it again next year! For more information on the Prevention of Blindness Society of Metropolitan Washington, visit www.youreyes.org. □

The Best of the Old and the New: Woody Plants for 2007

by Miri Talabac, Woody Plants Specialist

Another new year is upon us. In a few weeks the garden, responding to nearly imperceptible clues from nature will begin to stir. Likewise the gardener, hearing the call, will rise from his cozy armchair and amble out into the yard, studying his patch of earth for the signs: swelling buds, bustling birds and the strange yet familiar shoots pushing their way through the frosty earth.

We all enjoy the promise of these early days in mid to late winter—taking stock and making plans: move this, prune that, find just the right plant for that spot over there...

I would like to introduce some new plants which are available this year, and talk about some older favorites you may want to consider adding to your landscape.

Many new or exciting shrubs gaining popularity happen to be American natives, and for those who opt to “go native,” next season boasts our best selection yet for trees and shrubs. One underused beauty includes serviceberry (*Amelanchier*), a small tree with white spring flowers that produce a tasty crop of

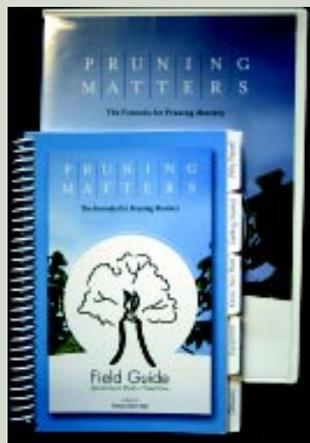


Weigela 'My Monet'

Photo Courtesy of Proven Winners® - www.provenwinners.com

The Kindest Cut of All

Book Review by Larry Hurley, Perennial Specialist



Here at the garden center, we get a lot of questions about pruning woody plants. We think we have an answer for you: it's not that complicated, once you learn how to look at your shrub; purchase a couple of quality pruning tools; understand three simple principles; and lose your fear of cutting. Fran West has developed a system for the homeowner, and put it into a compact “field guide” and a DVD, both called *Pruning Matters: The Formula for Pruning Mastery*. I found them to be interesting and useful, and recommend them to you. They are presented in a very user-friendly manner, bypassing the jargon so dear to the heart of horticulturists.

They are available in our garden centers, and also may be ordered from our website. In addition, Fran will be at our Beltsville store March 31st, 2007 at 10 AM to teach the material outlined in her publications. She will do a signing afterwards. For further information on the talk, see our Winter Seminar Schedule on pages 4 and 5.

purplish-black berries by early summer and warm yellow-orange fall foliage. Another gem is pawpaw (*Asimina*); largely pest-free and host plant for the zebra swallowtail butterfly, pawpaws give a tropical flair with their large leaves and nutritious banana-flavored fruit. For a tough street tree or an addition to your butterfly garden, hackberry (*Celtis*) provides a valuable resource for wildlife. This past fall saw an increase in recognition of *Symphoricarpos* (coralberry or snowberry), which grows wild in much of the northeast. From fall to early winter these adaptable shrubs expand the palette of berry colors with coral-rose to pastel pink and pure white. Spicebush (*Lindera*) has aromatic foliage and red fall berries perfect for the woods' edge. *Cephalanthus*, or buttonbush, draws summer pollinators with spheres of white flowers and performs admirably in wet areas. Chokeberry (*Aronia*) forms a colony that produces masses of long-lasting red or black fruits and develops brilliant scarlet or deep plum fall foliage color. The vining Dutchman's pipe, *Aristolochia*, covers pergolas and arbors with heart-shaped foliage. All of the above plants provide excellent wildlife food sources and habitat.

Other, more “old-fashioned,” shrubs are seeing a revival of new forms and colors. *Weigela* has recently been reinventing itself as summer-long interest in the garden. Newcomers like the painted variegation of ‘My Monet,’ the multi-toned flowers of ‘Carnival,’ and the more reserved elegance of ‘White Knight’ join recent introductions of purple-leaved dwarves like ‘Midnight Wine’ and several boldly variegated selections. Hydrangeas, ever the darlings of the summer garden, are also

continued on back cover

The Best of the Old and the New, continued from page 7



Caryopteris 'Pink Chablis'
Photo Courtesy of Proven Winners® -
www.provenwinners.com

diversifying themselves. A new European line, the 'Cityline' series, offers sturdy self-supporting mophead-types with rich colors and compact habits that are easy to tuck into tight spaces and container plantings. Lest we forget our southeast native, oakleaf hydrangeas recently welcomed 'Little Honey,' a pleasing yellow-leaved variety whose compact nature is excellent for fronting larger shrubs or pairing with perennials.

Keep on the lookout next year for new varieties of familiar plants and other great species new to you. Bluebeard (*Caryopteris*) now has a new color in 'Pink Chablis' and yellowish foliage in 'Sunshine Blue.' Japanese holly, ever popular for hedges and screens, now demands specimen status with 'Drops of Gold,' a sunny yellow-tipped variety. *Microbiota* is a fantastic evergreen groundcover for shady sites and will remind you of a juniper that has the textural softness of a fern and provides fantastic chocolate winter color. White forsythia (*Abeliophyllum*) flowers early on bare branches in either white or soft pink and displays well against any number of evergreens. *Deutzia* make great accent plants with masses of white spring flowers and tidy mounds of slender foliage. Check out lemon-leaved 'Chardonnay Pearls' and pink-flowered 'Rosealind.' Chinese fringe-flower (*Loropetalum*) is a tough but delicate-looking member of the witchhazel family, typically with profuse fragrant pink flowers and plum foliage.

You can also try new combinations of your favorite plants to get more seasonal interest out of the same space. Climbing roses make great ladders for clematis – choose varieties that bloom with the roses for pleasing color combinations, or those that bloom later to extend the flowering season. Ever adaptable, clematis also pairs well with climbing hydrangeas to add splashes of color to those shadier spots, or with cotoneaster where the bright blooms contrast wonderfully with red berries. Annual and tropical vines are also great companions to hardy ones, providing extra color without long-term competition. □

Check out lemon-leaved 'Chardonnay Pearls' and

pink-flowered 'Rosealind.' Chinese fringe-flower (*Loropetalum*) is a tough but delicate-looking member of the witchhazel family, typically with profuse fragrant pink flowers and plum foliage.



Caryopteris 'Sunshine Blue'
Photo Courtesy of Proven Winners® - www.provenwinners.com

WINTER 2007
FREE GARDENING SEMINARS SERIES
SCHEDULE INSIDE!

PRRST STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Suburban, MD
Permit No. 4889