

GROUNDWORKS CLEANINGS

“Sometimes an Art, Never a Science, Always a Craft”

Groundworks’ Season

Spring Opening

Thursday, April 15

Anniversary Sale

July 2-4

Spring Hours

9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Summer Hours

(July 5-Labor Day)

Tuesday-Sunday

10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Fall Hours

(September & October)

Friday-Sunday

10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Harvest Festival

Saturday,

September 18

3 to 6 p.m.



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304.466.4440 or 304.466.5181

Groundworks Rolls With the Punches

We admit it was a beast of a winter, at least for us warm-blooded creatures. The great big snow of December 19 set the tone. Just when we thought we had enjoyed the perfect meltdown, a couple inches of rain brought a wave down the Greenbrier River that utterly swamped the garden center. The snowstorms paraded through February, hamstringing recovery.

Through a relentless February we had plenty of time to recover the displaced, but waited for the other shoe to drop with a full thaw. It swept through again on March 14 and we began restoring the place. Hence reopening occurs a couple weeks later than the last few years.

Despite the lack of sunshine it really was not as cold as it seemed. The ground never froze hard and snow is supposed to be good fertilizer, so it promises

to be a superb growing season. The plants just love all this moisture, maybe especially in the form of a white blanket.

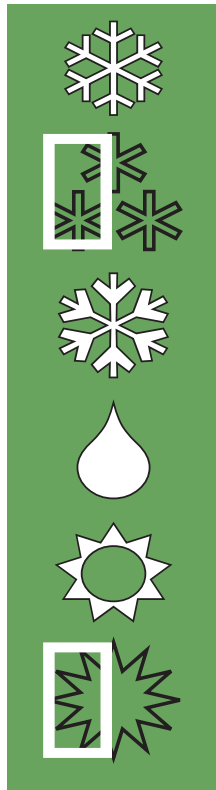
The shrub evergreens took it the hardest with many broken, bedraggled, and bewildering as to repair or replace. Many hard decisions will have to be made.

In general we at Groundworks maintain that if people like the weather, say, hot and dry, most plants don't like it. When people start to complain about too cool and wet, most plants are loving it.

Mother Nature just cannot please us all.

We do not think this winter has altered the fundamental warming dynamic that has brought more and more southerly plants into our gardens.

In any event, at Groundworks we will lick the wounds of winter off the place and offer a greater plant selection than ever.



Compost tea

For a plant to thrive, it needs a whole network of microbial life that inhabits a teeming megatropolis in the soil. A few shady characters would just as soon return the little starts to earth. When thousands of plants arrive at our doorstep in late winter, the battle is on. They arrive light-deprived, thirsty and in semi-dormancy.

Our new wake up call is compost tea. Batched up daily and used right away, it provides animated microbes that signal our plants that this is going to be a good life. They perk up and look forward to any sunlight coming their way. Formerly this perking could take several days, particularly if it's cloudy or cold. We could lose many plugs in that interim. The plants that have received tea have perked within a day.

For years we have been selling Jimmy Coffman's Triple C Compost made in Lewisburg. We continue to recommend it as a soil amendment and now suggest to our customers this additional use for it. We will help you with a recipe, or a whole kit for \$35.

More information is available at these websites:

<http://faq.gardenweb.com/faq/lists/organic/2002082739009975.html>

<http://www.captaincompostalabama.com/compostteastuff.htm>

Great New Annuals

Heliotrope 'Simply Scentsational'

Clouds of light blue flowers cover the ground of this new Proven Winners annual. In fact, it's so new it's only available in a few garden centers around the country. Very fragrant and as easy to grow as lantana once it warms up. The combination of these two will be a knockout. This is destined to be a great plant! 24-30" tall, 10-14" spacing.

Lobularia 'Snow Princess'

A unique breakthrough in the genus for heat tolerance and extended season performance. Unlike its lowly relative alyssum, this sterile Lobularia is extremely vigorous, and because it puts no energy into setting seed it has an incredibly long bloom time. In fact, in trials in Florida, 'Snow Princess'™ displayed mounds of fragrant, white blooms from January through July.

Creates a great hanging basket or window box and is a perfect filler in combinations. You have to see it to believe it!

Euphorbia 'Breathless Blush'

We have loved the Euphorbia 'Diamond Frost' and used it extensively in planters at the garden center. 'Breathless Blush' is a new, elegant and durable plant, the only red-flushed leaf form on the market. It features terrific branching and denser flowering. Heat-tolerant 'Breathless' fills in fast, makes stocky and mounded plants, and displays a showy mass of self-cleaning flowers all summer across a wide range of conditions. The long-lasting, free-flowering plants are well-suited to solo and mixed containers, in-ground plantings and holiday gift planters, with low water needs and no deadheading.

Stunning Perennials

Echinacea 'Mac'n' Cheese'

Narrow, golden yellow petals radiate from a coppery cone on this exciting new introduction from Terra Nova Nurseries in Portland, Oregon. Like its namesake, 'Mac 'n' Cheese' looks brighter than other yellow Coneflowers. Held on well-branched stems about 26" tall, its 4-1/2" blossoms will light up a border.

above the blades. Try it in the mixed border or in a container. After 8 years, this finally grew to 5 feet in height. Great for use in pots and in small urban gardens. 4-5 ft. x 20 in. at base.

Miscanthus 'Gold Bar'

Truly a show-stopper with its dense and dramatic gold striping from the base of the grass to its top. It is exceptionally upright and compact in habit. At the end of October, burgundy inflorescences appear just

Baptisia 'Starlite Prairieblues'

A hybrid of two species of Baptisia. Bicolored flowers are lavender blue and cream with a touch of yellow. It grows to 3 feet tall. Zones 4-8.



High on Hydrangeas

Hydrangeas take center stage in mid-summer and flourish into the fall. Fluffy heads of white blue and pink are an old fashioned treat, and the newest varieties make hydrangeas even more a must.

These plants like a rich soil with plenty of moisture and usually late afternoon shade. Most tend to wilt in a full day sun. Flowers are pink in alkaline soil but will turn blue if acidifying agents like humic acid or aluminum sulfate are added. They also need protection from the deer which is easily supplied with Liquid Fence.

By species the four major types are *H. arborescens*, *H. macrophylla*, *H. quercifolia*, and *H. paniculata*. The best known variety of our native *arborescens* is 'Annabelle', a tough long blooming white flower that tolerates sun and light shade. The newest development is the 'Incrediball' that sports much larger blooms on stronger stems. Look out for another head turner in the 'Invincibelle' with pink flowers that rebloom in fall!

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Color Theory

Continued from page 5

subject, visit http://gardening.about.com/od/gardendesign/a/GD_Color.htm.

Yellow has the lowest value, except for white, which is technically without color. Violet has the highest value, except for black, which is technically all colors. The eye is drawn to the lightest value first, which is crucial to consider in monochromatic gardens.

Guide the eye with light values and use darker values as contrast and focal points. For instance, a green hedge behind a flower border draws the eye toward the darker flowers. Also use evergreens as structure and bones in the garden. To get a strong feel for the values of the colors in your garden, look at it in black and white.

Visit this website: http://landscaping.about.com/od/galleryoflandscapephotos/ss/yard_pictures_7.htm to browse a color scheme gallery of pictures. Be sure to note if the plants are annual, perennial or shrubs and if they are hardy in our area.

Color theory made visual at Groundworks!

We will be displaying harmonious color arrangements on the end caps of our perennial benches. Painted backdrops with color patterns of red, pink, purple, orange, yellow and blue will be backgrounds for planters. The planters and plants will also be in that color range, and will feature our new line of planters, featuring lightweight pots in a full range of colors. You really gotta come see it!

High on Hydrangeas

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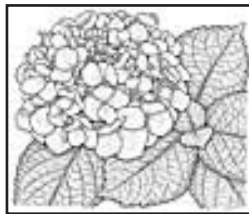
Hydrangea macrophylla has long been a problem plant in our area. These bold-leaved characters include the florist style mop heads and the delicate lacecaps. In our neck of the woods the stems would often winter kill, losing all the blooms that set on last year's stems.

The great breakthrough was the 'Endless Summer' that blooms on both old and new growth, so deadheading extends its persistent bloomtime. The 'Blushing Bride' takes the 'E. S.' into more compactness and rapid reblooming with a pink tinge. 'Let's Dance' is a small reblooming lacecap on old and new wood. 'Twist and Shout' is similar with red stems and red-burgundy fall foliage. Our reddest most compact hydrangea is 'Cityline Paris'.

H. quercifolia is the oak leaf with white panicle

type flowers and has resisted most of the breeders' advances. They grow best in some shade and are the most beautiful in the fall.

H. paniculata as 'Pee Gee' has graced landscapes for generations and has also made great strides in the last few years. It grows fine in the sun into a substantial woody shrub illuminating the late season. 'Limelight' is the standard bearer with lime green flowers turning white and then pink with the first hints of cooler weather. 'Pinky Winky' starts white and turns pink but continues to bloom creating a spectacular display. 'Tickled Pink' is a only 4' high and covered with light pink flowers. 'Vanilla Strawberry' offers scoops of pink and white and finally strawberry red flowers on red stems giving multiple layers of color and excitement.



Color: From Theory to Reality

Color is easily the most prominent factor in your garden and often the first one considered. Color is what most gardeners are drawn to. We might not dwell on it but we know what we like when we see it. Understanding a bit of color theory helps you create fabulous gardens and containers.

The primary colors are red, yellow and blue. Blending these three colors gives us the rest of the rainbow. Secondaries (orange, green and violet) and tertiaries (yellow-orange, yellow-green and blue-violet) round out the 12 colors shown on the wheel. (To view a color wheel, visit this link: <http://ficml.org/jemimap/style/color/wheel.html>)

Red, yellow and blue are arrayed at three equally-spaced points around the color wheel, with the secondary and tertiary colors blends of the primary colors. Applying color theory to garden design requires a choice of harmonious or contrasting composition.

Harmonious colors share some value and are next to each other on the wheel. Contrasting colors thrive on their opposition.

You can work with three equidistant colors (triads) or one color and the two colors on either side of its complement (violet with yellow-orange and yellow-green, which are known as split complements).

For more information on this

Continued on page 4

Harmonious Combinations

Monochromatic: Choosing one hue and using it in its various shades, tints and tones.

- Less is more
- Can be a good beginners' approach, as it avoids the chaos of too many colors
- Requires an eye that can see the differences within a color
- A very sophisticated approach in its subtlety
- Texture and repetition become more noticeable and important
- Green makes a good transition from one shade to the next
- Can also be employed as a progression, moving from one hue to the next on the wheel

Analogous: Working with two to three colors that are adjacent to one another on the wheel (red, orange, yellow)

Makes an easier transition for the eye

Contrasting Combinations

Complementary: In color theory complementarity actually means opposite colors on the wheel (red/green, orange/blue, yellow/purple.)

- No common pigment means maximum contrast.
- Can be jarring if there is too much contrast used
- Try to favor one color and use the other as an accent or focal point
- Use texture and form for variety, rather than too much color



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“A weed is a plant
that has mastered
every survival skill
except for growing in
rows.”

~ Doug Larson

“A perfect summer
day is when the sun is
shining, the breeze is
blowing, the birds are
singing, and the lawn
mower is broken.”

~ James Dent (former
Charleston Gazette columnist)

“You can lead a
horticulture, but
you can't make her
think.”

~ Dorothy Parker

