

<P class="MsoNormal style=MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt; TEXT-ALIGN: justify; tab-stops: .25in"><FONT face="Times New Roman" size="3">In early spring, we were commissioned to make over a small front lawn to give it some curb appeal before the house was put on the market. The lawn itself was overpowered by two cedar trees, which we cut below ground level and covered over with dirt and then seeded with grass. In the small area next to the door, we planted three pretty boxwoods. To the right of the door, we spaced three burning bushes. Along the stairs, in a very narrow area where erosion was an issue, we planted mounds of monkey grass to help hold the soil back, and then mulched each newly planted area. Simply but tastefully done, the transformation was just what the house needed. It does not take much to radically beautify a landscape.</FONT></P> <P class="MsoNormal style=MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt; TEXT-ALIGN: justify; tab-stops: .25in"><FONT size="3"><FONT face="Times New Roman"><SPAN style="mso-tab-count: 1">◆◆◆◆◆ </SPAN>For another customer who loves color, we designed a raised bed that included azaleas for spring color, Knockout rosebushes for color all summer, burning bushes for fall color, and Maidenhair miscanthus grass for color all winter (brown grass adds some color and dimension against an otherwise bare background).</FONT></FONT></P> <P class="MsoNormal style=MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt; TEXT-ALIGN: justify; tab-stops: .25in"><FONT size="3"><FONT face="Times New Roman"><SPAN style="mso-tab-count: 1">◆◆◆◆◆ </SPAN>We designed another raised bed for a gentleman whose front yard only receives five hours of morning light. For this exposure we selected dappled willows that can be allowed to grow 10-15 feet tall or trimmed to keep bushlike. The spring growth on the dappled willow is peach colored, which matches his peach brick ranch home. The bush is a variegated green and white leaf that also sets off the peach brick. We also selected Oakleaf hydrangeas, which boast large white blooms in the summer and beautiful fall foliage in the fall, and Morning Light miscanthus, a variegated green and white grass that requires little light. Around the miscanthus we selected peach colored impatiens, and under his low window, boxwoods will form a full low hedge with pruning◆again, all complementing his peach colored brick. </FONT></FONT></P> <P class="MsoNormal style=MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt; TEXT-ALIGN: justify; tab-stops: .25in"><FONT size="3"><FONT face="Times New Roman"><SPAN style="mso-tab-count: 1">◆◆◆◆◆ </SPAN>For a commercial business that had its walk lined in Goldmound spirea (a very poor choice, in our estimation, for any design because of their poor foliage, their sickly looking blooms, and their tendency to die out in the middle and look ragged), we chose boxwoods. For two raised beds on either side of their door, we planted three Knockout rosebushes, one Maidenhair miscanthus, two burning bushes, and three Stella lilies. The combination looks great! </FONT></FONT></P> <P class="MsoNormal style=MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt; TEXT-ALIGN: justify; tab-stops: .25in"><FONT size="3"><FONT face="Times New Roman"><SPAN style="mso-tab-count: 1">◆◆◆◆◆ </SPAN>When selecting shrubbery, you must consider exposure, amount of daylight, height of house, color of brick or paint, size of full-grown plant, area, shape, and maintenance requirements. Some plants look fine in their pots, but remember they have been shaped. Most plants do not hold the shape you see in the pot; therefore, you need to find out their growing habits. You also need to find out their full height and width to determine if the plant will fit in your space and try to envision what it will look like when full grown. One of our customers had us to plant pyramidal hollies next to his brick church, not knowing how massive they become in maturity. So when planting them, we spaced them according to the dimensions of the height and width they would eventually reach. This is somewhat like selecting a breed of dog that will fit your living space. </FONT></FONT></P><FONT face="Times New Roman" size="3">◆</FONT> <P

class="MsoNormal style=MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt; TEXT-ALIGN: justify; tab-stops: .25in"><FONT size="3"><FONT face="Times New Roman"><SPAN style="mso-tab-count: 1">◆◆◆◆◆</SPAN><B>Our pick for rose bushes:</B> For color all summer long, Knockout rosebushes are our favorite because they are disease resistant, never need to be sprayed for black spot, and maintain a shapely form with full foliage; but best of all, they bloom continuously from spring through fall, filling our vases with flowers for months. My particular favorite is the light pink Blush, but I just intermixed the light pink with the medium pink around our front walk. And because they do not require spraying, you can use their petals in summer punches, on cakes, and in jellies. You can intermix these with other shrubs and grasses, but be sure to allow for their four-foot wide expanse.</FONT></FONT></P> <P class="MsoNormal style=MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt; TEXT-ALIGN: justify; tab-stops: .25in"><FONT size="3"><FONT face="Times New Roman"><SPAN style="mso-tab-count: 1">◆◆◆◆◆</SPAN><B>Our two favorite bushes:</B> For overall uniformity, perfect shape, size, and color, you cannot beat burning bushes. Without ever trimming these, they look magnificent all the time and quickly grow to a lovely height.</FONT></FONT></P> <P class="MsoBodyText style=MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt; tab-stops: .25in"><FONT size="3"><FONT face="Times New Roman"><SPAN style="mso-tab-count: 1">◆◆◆◆◆</SPAN>Boxwoods, of course, are a favorite English garden staple, for no English manor is complete without a boxwood hedge; however, I prefer them to be kept separate and trimmed for their own individual mound. Our favorite for our own garden and for our customers is Winter Green or Winter Gem, which stay green all winter.</FONT></FONT></P> <P class="MsoNormal style=MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt; TEXT-ALIGN: justify; tab-stops: .25in"><FONT size="3"><FONT face="Times New Roman"><SPAN style="mso-tab-count: 1">◆◆◆◆◆</SPAN><B>Grasses are a must:</B> And of course, I love miscanthus grass. My favorite are the dwarf and larger Maidenhair, but I also like the Silver Japanese and Morning Light varieties for their nicely variegated green and white color. For a more exotic look for a patio, try the Zebra miscanthus.</FONT></FONT></P> <P class="MsoNormal style=MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt; TEXT-ALIGN: justify; tab-stops: .25in"><FONT size="3"><FONT face="Times New Roman"><SPAN style="mso-tab-count: 1">◆◆◆◆◆</SPAN><B>Elephant ears:</B> What are those large ears next to your pond? From the beginning, elephant ears have been a great hit, especially with children. They especially look great at the edge of fishponds because of their tropical flair. Of course, it doesn't hurt that they tolerate wet soil either, so I always try to plant some each year. Last year I planted Black Magic elephant ears for their purplish-black narrower three-foot long heart-shaped leaves. The plant will actually grow up to five feet tall and wide, but not in our poor soil in the country. Actually even though these are perennials, ours did not come back this year. The ones I am most familiar with are the annual varieties that need their tubers dug up and stored in a cool, dry place until next spring. Unfortunately, I never think about it when it's time to remove them before the ground freezes, and on the few occasions that I have remembered, the tubers became moldy and died. However, elephant ears are so exotic looking that it is worth purchasing new tubers each year just to have some hanging over our fishponds.</FONT></FONT></P> <P class="MsoNormal style=MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt; TEXT-ALIGN: justify; tab-stops: .25in"><FONT size="3"><FONT face="Times New Roman"><SPAN style="mso-tab-count: 1">◆◆◆◆◆</SPAN><B>Our flower pick:</B> Deep pink and purple Wave petunias are a perfect annual summer flower. They are easy to care for with a constant splash of color all summer, which makes this a must for every garden. Growing low to the ground and spreading 3-4 feet, petunias are an excellent pick for a wall or even a basket. You do not need to dead head these for constant bloom, so plant and stand back and enjoy. I plant

these in hanging baskets, over our rock walls, in potted planters, and in my raised vegetable beds. They add color, dimension and insect appeal to the garden. </FONT></FONT></P> <P class="MsoNormal style=MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt; TEXT-ALIGN: justify; tab-stops: .25in"><FONT size="3"><FONT face="Times New Roman"><SPAN style="mso-tab-count: 1">◆◆◆◆◆</SPAN>It does not take much shrubbery or many grasses or flowers to completely transform a rather dull yard into a stunning one. Just keep in mind exposure, height, and color.</FONT></FONT></P> <P class="MsoNormal style=MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt; TEXT-ALIGN: justify; tab-stops: .25in"><FONT size="3"><FONT face="Times New Roman"><SPAN style="mso-tab-count: 1">◆◆◆◆◆</SPAN>Our front walk has an arbor covered with pink climbing roses and purple climbing hyacinths. To one side is a mounded bed of pink rosebushes, and on the other is a mounded bed of light and medium pink rosebushes, a burning bush, a dwarf miscanthus, three Stella lilies, a purple pink liatris, and several monkey grasses. On one spot of the mound we placed a very large greenish blue ceramic container that we planted with purple nicotiana, white Dusty Miller, and purplish pink Wave petunias. It is the perfect welcome to our home.</FONT></FONT></P> <P class="MsoNormal style=MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt; TEXT-ALIGN: justify; tab-stops: .25in"><FONT size="3"><FONT face="Times New Roman"><SPAN style="mso-tab-count: 1">◆◆◆◆◆</SPAN>Under our big butternut tree, we have a basket of hanging pink Wave petunias. Next to our concrete bench, we have a pink hibiscus tree. Under our bushes we have double blossomed pink impatiens, and hanging from our porch is a Boston fern and a basket of purple streptocarpus flowers that bloom all summer in the shade. Their leaves are succulent like violets◆ leaves. On our porch is an ornamental iron flower box filled with a white ground cover and double blossom pink impatiens and a huge planter filled with a large fern. And then to the side of the front yard is our vegetable garden.</FONT></FONT></P> <P class="MsoNormal style=MARGIN: 0in 0in 0pt; TEXT-ALIGN: justify; tab-stops: .25in"><FONT size="3"><FONT face="Times New Roman"><SPAN style="mso-tab-count: 1">◆◆◆◆◆</SPAN>Next to our drive, we have a pink hydrangea, deep pink phlox, pink veronica speedwell, pink zinnias, purple lantana, purple salvia, purple coneflowers, lavender/blue Russian sage, rose bee balm, rosy purple globe amaranth, pink dahlias, cosmos, rose rock moss, and creeping thyme.</FONT></FONT></P><SPAN style="FONT-SIZE: 12pt; FONT-FAMILY: 'Times New Roman','serif'; mso-fareast-font-family: 'Times New Roman'; mso-ansi-language: EN-US; mso-fareast-language: EN-US; mso-bidi-language: AR-SA"><SPAN style="mso-tab-count: 1">◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆</SPAN>Our family truly loves working in our gardens (and actually, other people◆s as well), thus ◆ Summers in the Garden◆ became the name of our landscaping company. One Saturday in late spring, we spent 12 hours in our front and back yard, including a trip to two nurseries to fill in some gaps, reveling in sowing and planting this year◆s array of gorgeous plants. When we are in the country, it is common for us to put in 12-hour days outside. Make it a family activity and enjoy what Adam and Eve did when God commissioned them to tend to the Garden. What a tremendous blessing to pass on to our children!</SPAN>