



GREAT GARDENS GAZETTE

Summer 2004

Great Greetings!

“He who knows what sweets and virtues are in the ground,
the plants, the waters, the heavens,
and how to come at these enchantments
—is the rich and royal man.”
- Ralph Waldo Emerson

Welcome to Summer!! We all made it through the hectic Spring time. While we look forward to Spring with great anticipation for nature to reveal all the new growth and beauty it has been hiding during the Winter, it can be a very chaotic time of year in the landscaping business. Summer slows things down a just little bit and we all get to enjoy the fruits of our labor. While Spring brought some changes to Great Gardens, we do have some exiting developments!! We have some new employees that have added an additional dimension to our services, including a chemical applicator to address your needs on a full time basis as well as a summer intern who is a landscape architect student at Texas A&M who is helping us out with various projects. The really great news is that we have a new Account Manager who you can read about on the next page. Just like your garden, Great Gardens is always evolving to better meet your needs!!



After the spring, we all need a little rest!!

Great Water Gardens

There is nothing quite as relaxing as taking a break in your garden and settling down next to a cooling, calming water feature. Water features can be used in your garden as a focal point or as an accent piece. They come in a range of styles, sizes and prices. You should base your choice on such factors as the space available, budget and the time you have for performing maintenance on the feature. There are two primary types of water features to choose from: active and passive. The passive types are those that the water moves only by a breeze such as a bird bath or in the case of a pond that has no pump. An active water feature is one that adds a new dimension to your garden—sound. This would be a fountain or a waterfall in which the water moves or cascades through the water feature and uses a pump to create movement.

Water features do not have to be large and expensive. A wonderful accent piece would be a creative container such as whiskey barrels, lotus bowls, basins, or wooden boxes. Anything you can waterproof can be used to create an interesting container. All you have to do is get a waterproof liner or a brush-on sealant at your local home center to create a waterproof environment. Then just fill this container with water, rocks and plants, like water lilies or water hyacinths, and you have a simple yet eye-catching water feature.

Of course you can always opt for a large water feature such as a pond that includes a pump and filter. Ponds can be purchased as a prefabricated item or you can have a unique pond designed and installed with a concrete surface. You can add such features as a natural looking waterfall flowing into your pond for additional interest. Make sure you choose a wide range of plants for your pond such oxygenators which are submerged plants that help to control the algae growth. Floating plants should cover approximately 75% of the water surface to provide shade and absorb dissolved nutrients. Then there are other plants that add form and color to your pond and that act to attract birds and butterflies. Of course you can always add fish to your filtered ponds as well.

Whatever you decide, large or small, passive or active, a water feature is always an added delight for your garden.

Great Garden's Website

Great News!!!! Great Garden's now has a website at greatgardensinc.com. We are excited about using this new tool for sharing information with our customers. Please visit the website to learn about any weather updates that might affect your maintenance service or to look at descriptions and pictures of current projects we are working on. Also be sure to go to the Newsletter page to look up old issues of our newsletter for articles and information that you might find interesting. Feel free to call or e-mail us if there is anything you think would be of value or would like to see included on our website. We always welcome your input!

Great Garden Reminder

From June 1 through September 30, is the time period where Dallas watering restrictions are in effect. The following is a overview of the summer rules:

- * No lawn watering between 10:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.
- * Any new irrigation systems installed must be equipped with a working rain/freeze sensor.
- * All systems in operation after Jan. 1, 2005 must be up-graded with a working rain/freeze sensor.
- * Residential customers using more than 15,000 gallons of water in one month will pay a higher rate for that water.
- * Violations of the watering restrictions will result in a fine of not less than \$250 or not more than \$2,000.

Great Ideas

A great addition to any porch or balcony is a moss-lined basket. They create an accent piece that is much more natural looking than a tradition pot or container. The most important issues to think about when deciding whether to use a moss-lined basket or not are water and light. It is much better to have them situated in an area that has partial or all shade since these baskets have a tendency to dry out quickly. In the summer in North Texas it will be necessary to water these baskets every day. Therefore, make sure you make arrangements for this to happen or your plants will die very quickly.

If you do decide you would like a moss-lined basket and that you would like to try your hand at creating one yourself, here are some simple instructions. All you need is a wire hanging basket, unmilled sphagnum moss, potting soil, a bucket and plants to place in the basket. Fill a bucket with clean water and immerse the moss in it for several minutes. Line the bottom of the basket with the wet moss. To achieve the lush, full effect of a basket dripping with flowers, you're going to plant the sides of the basket as well as the top. Start with trailing plants such as verbena and thread the plants through the moss on the sides so that the rootballs and soil are inside of the basket and the foliage is outside of the basket. Add additional soil in the center of the planter and then put more plants in the top portion. Try using some upright and bushy plants along with trailing plants in the top portion to get an interesting arrangement. When you have placed all the plants in, add additional soil if necessary and water thoroughly. Make sure you hang the plant on a sturdy and strong hook as these baskets can be very heavy.

A good tip for summer is to add ice to your moss baskets to keep them moist.

Great Guy

We are happy to welcome Michael Whaley to Great Gardens as our new Account Manager. He comes to us from TruGreen Landcare and has a degree in Horticulture and Landscape Architecture from Oklahoma State University. We know you will find him to be a great addition to our team.

Great Gardens Services

Yard Renovations
New Construction Landscape
Seasonal Flowers
Courtyard and Container Gardens
Retaining Walls
Flag Stone Patio Construction

Total Lawn Maintenance
Fertilization
Aeration
Weed and Pest Control
Irrigation Repair
Landscape Design



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GREAT GARDENS MANAGEMENT

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