

An Enduring Gift

Legend has it that Mr. Behnke found a willow oak sapling on the nursery property some 60 years ago and transplanted it to the spot where it still stands, a few feet from the exact center of the nursery. The legend continues that he had a road re-routed to save the tree. They say he could move storm clouds away by sheer will. He was that kind of man.

Albert Behnke passed away on December 27, 1992, at the age of 88. But he left his family and his employees the wonderful legacy of the nursery he built with such pride and the beautiful willow oak that is now 50 feet tall and has an impressive girth of over 11 feet. It shades us in the summers and showers us with acorns each fall, much to the delight of our customers. Its majestic outline against a vivid November sunset is awe inspiring.

A single tree, carefully planted, provides definition to a garden; it lends character. Our willow oak reminds us of a strong man with sturdy outstretched arms who provides encouragement and protection, always teaching us and helping us grow.

Consider planting a shade tree that your children and their children will stand under one day; one that they may try to encircle with their joined hands, or use as home base for a game of tag. Imagine a beech tree with its smooth gray bark, dark shiny green leaves and the welcoming coolness of its shade. What a friendly, comfortable place for a garden bench.

A tree is a sustaining and enduring gift. Whether it's a graceful, dependable leyland cypress that provides a safe habitat for birds, a flowering dogwood that thrills us each spring and feeds the birds with its red berries all winter, or a sugar maple that glows and shimmers in brilliant red-orange each October, a tree helps us to remember the important people and moments of our lives.

-Carol Kastorf



Organic Corner



Gardening is going organic. Non-toxic chemicals and organic fertilizers are readily available. There is a sharp increase in composting and recycling yard waste. Many gardeners are selecting more plants that are drought tolerant in an effort to conserve water. All this is part of an Organic Gardening movement which includes Integrated Pest Management (IPM).

IPM is the regulation of the amount of pesticides, fertilizers, and herbicides used, as well as the employment of alternate methods of pest control, such as hand-picking, traps, and the application of earth-friendly substances such as dormant oil, milky spore and insecticidal soaps.

Now is the time to be on the lookout for *lacebugs*, *spider mites*, and *aphids*, which are controlled with a light horticultural oil spray

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Sweet Peas make a Comeback

Plant diversity is one of Behnke's strongest marketing elements. Flowering annuals available for 1994 will include many new introductions. Here is a smattering of them:

Sweet Pea (Lathyrus) - Believe it or not, at the turn of the century this was Burpee's best selling annual! Behnke's is bringing it back for its sweet fragrance and the beauty of its graceful, curving vines covered with delicate, old-fashioned flowers. Sweet Pea favors full sun, blooms three months or longer, and makes an elegant cut flower.

Calandrinia - this plant is a landscaper's dream come true! Two-inch balls of vibrant violet-rose flowers

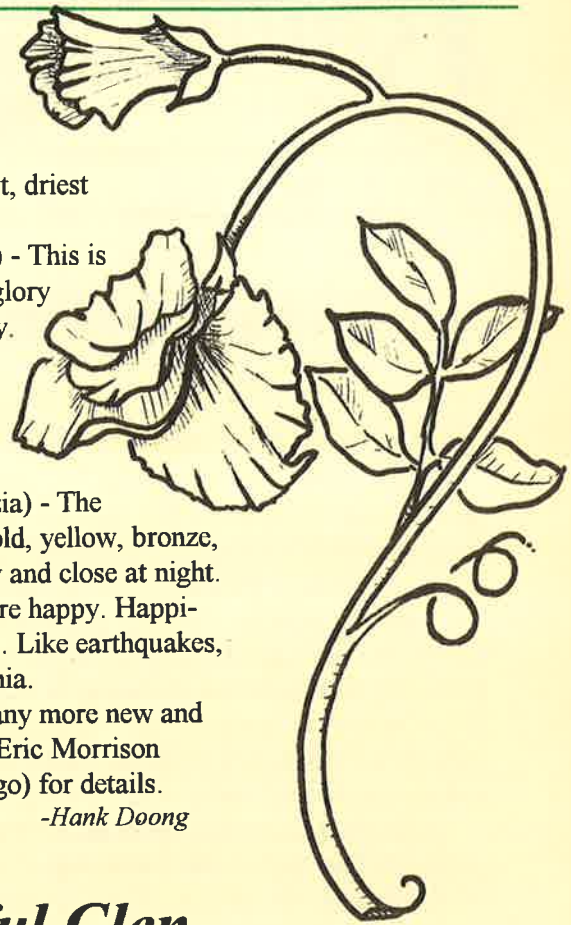
which bloom lavishly in the hottest, driest places on planet earth.

Morning Glory (Convolvulus) - This is a spectacular bush type morning glory whose flowers remain open all day. It doesn't climb, prefers dry soil and little fertilizer. An excellent choice for containers.

California Poppy (Eschscholzia) - The silky, saucer-shaped flowers of gold, yellow, bronze, scarlet, rose, and white open daily and close at night. Plants bloom all summer if they are happy. Happiness is full sun and dry conditions. Like earthquakes, they are perennial only in California.

Behnke's will be featuring many more new and unusual annuals this spring. Ask Eric Morrison (Beltsville) or Bruce Toland (Largo) for details.

-Hank Doong



Planting for the Future: A Restful Glen

The indestructible hosta is rightly called the Queen of the Shade. The somewhat stodgy foliage plant of grandmother's garden is now available in a number of bright hues from yellow to deep blue, with a myriad selection of greens touched with complementary accents of white and gold. The hosta can quickly become an obsession: a collector's delight. A gathering of hostas planted around a bench invites you to linger on a hot summer's day.

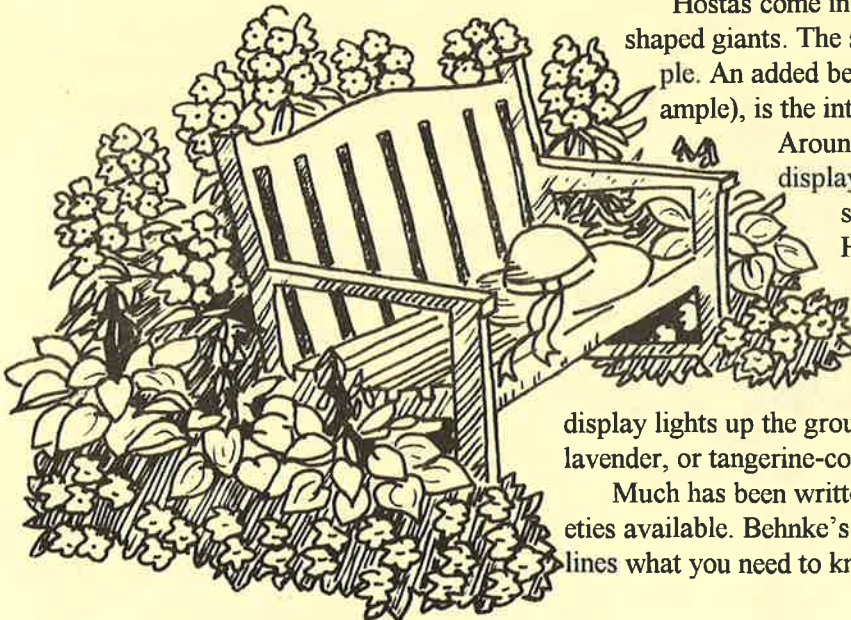
Hostas come in all sizes from petite specimens to grandiose fountain-shaped giants. The spikes of bell-shaped flowers range from white to purple. An added benefit of some hostas (Hosta 'Royal Standard' for example), is the intense fragrance the flowers bring to the restful glen.

Around the bench, a backdrop of hydrangeas offers a floral display of pinks, blues or whites. Large clusters of flowers signal in the shade a respite from the labors of the day. Hydrangeas offer variety, too: Oak-leaf and Lace-cap hydrangeas provide alternatives to the standard garden hydrangea (*Hydrangea macrophylla*).

The final touch is found in the drifts of impatiens whose low-growing, everblooming summer display lights up the ground wherever the eye may glance. Small intense rose, lavender, or tangerine-colored flowers hug the woodland floor like a carpet.

Much has been written about hostas, providing details of hundreds of varieties available. Behnke's provides a handy care summary which quickly outlines what you need to know to get a hosta garden started.

-John Peter Thompson





Behnke's Gardening Tips

May

Be on the lookout for **aphids** in early May. They love new growth, especially on roses.

The **last frost date** in our area is May 10th. Plant annuals and seeds safely outdoors. Don't forget to mix in an organic fertilizer when planting, and supplement with liquids later.

Fertilize azaleas, rhododendrons, and most flowering plants after they bloom. Bulbs need feeding, too. To keep them blooming year after year, use an organic rich in bonemeal right after they bloom.

Check for **borers** on your dogwoods. Look for small pin holes around the base of the trunk and crooks of branches. Tree Wrap® will protect newly planted trees. Rhododendrons, lilacs and red maples are susceptible, too. Check with our Garden Shop for methods of prevention.

Have you fed your **lawn** yet? You may want to use a fertilizer that helps break down thatch — organics do the job. If you are starting seeds, Renu® is time released.

Houseplants can be moved outside now, but move them gradually into sunnier areas, as their leaves may scorch if they are exposed to unexpected levels of sunlight.

June

Insects flourish in the heat. Watch for lacebug on azaleas, spider mites on evergreens, bagworms on arborvitae, and those dastardly Japanese beetles on your roses and annuals. Try organic sprays first.

Azaleas, rhododendrons and other evergreens can be **pruned** now. Leggy plants can be cut back to a

third of their height. Don't forget to fertilize.

Divide 3 to 5 year old **German iris** after flowering; fertilize and replant.

Fertilize and pinch **mums** till July 15th. Keep them about 8 inches or they'll be tall and leggy by fall.

Cut back spring blooming **perennials** now.

Don't allow **houseplants** to sit with saucers full of water or they'll suffer root rot.

July

All plants grown in the ground will need a **good soaking** (1 inch of water) each week. Thunderstorms don't necessarily count! Keep in mind, however, that over-watered plants will also wilt. If in doubt, check the rootball.

Watering **vegetables** more than twice a week will result in weak, shallow-rooted plants. Water *deeply* and less often, and perhaps mulch with straw to conserve moisture.

Most plants grown in **containers** will need to be watered daily in hot and sunny weather.

Evening waterings may result in **fungus and disease** problems.

August

If fall is for planting, then August is for planning! **Woody plants, perennials and spring flowering bulbs** do beautifully when planted in the fall. Start dreaming up beautiful gardens now.

Call Behnke's for more information: (301) 937-1100

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or the use of insecticidal soap. Organic methods of spraying require that infested plants be monitored through the summer.

Milky spore applied to the lawn now will devastate the population of *japanese beetle grubs* maturing in the ground by infecting the grubs and causing a natural death. It will not rid all beetles, but will limit the population considerably. One application of milky spore is effective for years, but it can be difficult to obtain. If you can't get it, another organic way to kill grubs is to use beneficial nematodes.

-Marie Mikulak

Meet: Helen Gardiner



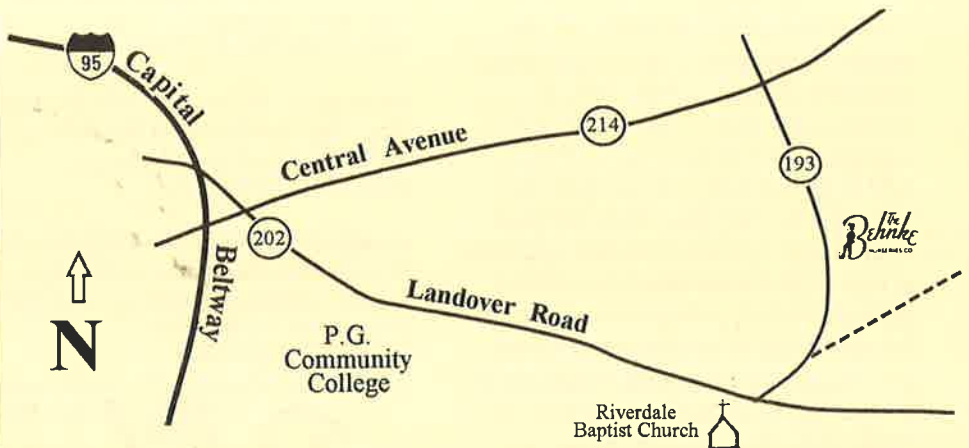
Yes, it's her real name! Prior to coming to Behnke's in 1974, Helen worked for Bolgiano's Seed Company in Washington, D.C. Helen brought her knowledge of garden supplies and merchandising skills to Behnke's and has added an astounding ability to diagnose plant diseases and insects. Helen heads up our Garden Shop and is always happy to assist you with your gardening problems.

From the Farm

Did you know that Behnke's has an 80 acre farm in Largo, Maryland? This site was acquired in 1978 for use as a production nursery, and presently boasts 10 acres of greenhouses, 26 acres of woody plants, and over 4 acres of perennials. You like selection, you say? The production division was developed to grow the quality of plants Behnke's insists on and a selection that would please our customers.

Over 200,000 perennial plants are grown at Largo each year, as well as 100,000 woody plants and well over a million annuals.

Here's the good news. You can purchase Behnke-grown plants straight from our farm. Since our Largo retail garden center opened in 1984, more and more customers discover us each year, and are delighted to find the same quality, selection and service for which Behnke Nurseries is known.



Behnke Nurseries Largo, 700 Watkins Park Drive

Open 7 days a week, phone: (301) 249-2492

If you are interested in a group tour of our production facilities, please call us.

FREE Flowers

Exchange this coupon for one free pack of blooming annuals (value \$1.99) with any purchase. While supplies last.



Offer good through June 30, 1994



Garden Recipe

Red, White & Blue Pie

- 1 baked pie crust (9")
- 2 quarts strawberries
- ½ pint blueberries
- ½ pint whipping cream
- 1 cup water
- 1 cup sugar
- 3 tablespoons cornstarch

Clean and stem strawberries, and crush 1 cup in a 2- quart pot. Add 2/3 cup water and sugar. Bring to a boil. Cook 2 to 3 minutes, until berries are soft. Dissolve cornstarch in remaining 1/3 cup water. Add to boiling berry mixture and cook, stirring constantly until thick and clear, about 5 min. Remove from heat and allow to cool to lukewarm. Brush bottom and sides of pie crust with some cooled glaze. Set remaining strawberries in the crust, pointing up. Sprinkle blueberries over top of strawberries. Cover all with remaining glaze. Chill until firm. Before serving, whip cream and decorate the edge of the pie, leaving the center to show the berries. Serves 6 to 8.

— Carl Behnke, grandson of Albert Behnke and Executive Chef, TPC Summerlin, Las Vegas



11300 Baltimore Avenue
P.O. Box 290
BELTSVILLE, MARYLAND 20705

Horticultural Highlights

Herb Plant Sale, National Arboretum
Saturday May 7, 10 - 3:30pm
Also, tours of the Nat'l Herb Garden.
Info: (202) 475-4815

Mother's Day, Sunday May 9.
Send Mom a spring bouquet or a basket of violets! Behnke Florist Shop
FTD worldwide (301) 937-4032

Bonsai Auction, Saturday May 14 at
Behnke's, 10am. Sponsored by the
Potomac Bonsai Society.
Florist/Landscape Building, Beltsville

Georgetown Garden Tour, Sat. May
14, 10:30-5pm. Visit some spectacular
Georgetown gardens.
Info: (202) 333-4953 or 333- 3649

Brookside Gardens Sunday Strolls
Any May Sunday stroll through
McCrillis Garden/Gallery.
Info: (301) 949-8231

Dumbarton Oaks, Washington D.C.
During May the lilacs, perennial
borders, clematis, roses, peonies and
fringe trees are in bloom.
Info: (202) 342-3200

Iris Show, Saturday June 18 at
Behnke's, 12-4pm. Sponsored by the
Iris Society.
Florist/Landscape Building, Beltsville

What's Bugging You: Plant Clinic,
Sunday June 19 at Behnke's Beltsville,
10-3pm. Let's get those bugs and
diseases the organic way!

Father's Day, Sunday June 19
How about a cool tool or a great new
book for Dad?

Gardening Day, Sunday June 19
Behnke's Beltsville (all day)
Plant Clinic:(10 - 3pm).
Add a Splash to your Garden: Water
Gardening demo (1pm)
Planting demos (10, 12, & 2pm)

Independence Day, Monday July 4
Behnke Nurseries closed.

Behnke Nurseries Largo Farm Tour
Saturday June 25, 10am. John Peter
Thompson, Albert Behnke's grandson,
will lead the tour.
Info: (301) 249-2492



Beltsville, MD (301) 937-1100
11300 Baltimore Avenue (U.S. Route 1)
Florist (301) 937-4032 Landscaping (301) 937-4035

Largo/Upper Marlboro, MD (301) 249-2492
700 Watkins Park Drive/ Route 193

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