

Volume 12, Issue 1 A Newsletter for Gardeners Winter 2005

Inside

3

Beyond the
African Violet—
Meet the Family

4-5

Winter 2005 Gardening Workshops & Free Seminars

6

Shrubs and Trees to Enliven Your Winter Garden

7

Items of Interest to Gardeners

Potomac Store Receives Award

8

Get a Jump on a Spring Landscape Design!



Looking Ahead on our 75th Anniversary

- by Frank Monahan, Vice-President for Retail Operations

his year, Behnke Nurseries is celebrating its 75th year as Maryland's premier family of garden centers. Seventy five years ago, Albert and Rose Behnke opened their nursery in Beltsville, Maryland. We are proud of that story: we have chronicled it in our newsletter and on our website. Now, we look ahead to new and exciting changes at Behnke Nurseries. Changes that we think will make your shopping experience at Behnke's more interesting, educational and enjoyable.

First, we are expanding our spring lecture and workshop series at Beltsville to over 50 presentations, featuring our own staff as well as many outside speakers, including author Carole Otteson, designer Jan Lowry, plant connoisseur Ellen Hornig, clematis breeder Raymond Evison from the Isle of Guernsey, perennial expert David Culp, and radio personality Andre Viette. Our lectures continue to be offered for free, and workshops have a nominal charge to cover materials. Our intent is to continue to offer lectures and workshops throughout the year, with expanded programs for children.



Blooming pansies are a cheerful welcome to shoppers each spring and fall at Behnke Nurseries.

As 2005 progresses we will be making improvements at our Beltsville and Potomac stores to make your garden center experience more pleasant. We are adding coffee bars to both locations, so that shoppers may pause and ponder over a fragrant cup of coffee. At Potomac, we will expand the

continued on page 2



The Behnke GardeNews

is published 5 times per year.

Managing Editor:
John Peter Thompson

HORTICULTURAL ADVISOR:
Larry Hurley

Layout\Design\Illustration: Lori Hicks

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS:

Leslie Carroll
Lori Hicks
Larry Hurley
Frank Monahan
Susan O'Hara
Miri Talabac

Hours

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

BEHNKE'S AT BELTSVILLE

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

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

Looking Ahead, from page 1

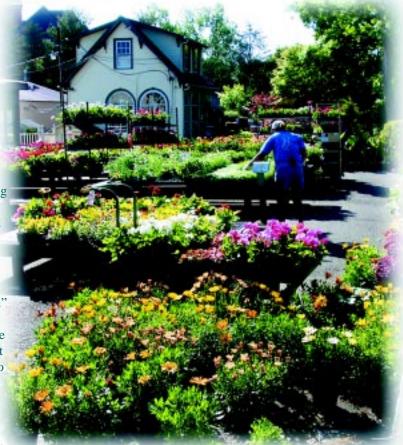
offerings of our Holiday Gift Shop to make it a year round boutique for garden-related gifts and accessories. Along with our top-quality florist at Potomac and our excellent selection of blooming and foliage plants, Behnke's at Potomac will indeed be a one-stop destination for gift-givers on the go.

At Beltsville, plans are underway for construction of "Behnke's Main Street". Working with local artisans, we will offer arts, crafts, garden tools and other items from individual tents and kiosks,

offering our customers additional enticements. A new full color video-sign will be erected on U.S. Highway 1 in front of the store to keep our loyal customers and passing motorists informed of upcoming events and the array of plants and other items available.

Behnke Nurseries is also working on offering a more robust and interesting web site for your information and amusement. We'll keep you informed of upcoming events, articles on interesting gardening topics, an interactive "design-your-own-garden" online and coming very soon, a garden shop online to order garden goods that can be delivered directly to your door.

We continue our dedication to being not only sellers of fine plants, but also growers. As we go to press, construction continues at our new greenhouse and nursery complex at Lothian,



Behnke's garden center at Potomac offers an impressive selection, a friendly, helpful staff, and a charming Florist Shop — come visit us soon!

Maryland. The switchover from our Largo greenhouses to Lothian will be completed by mid-summer, and this has been planned such that there will be a continuous supply of Behnke-grown plants throughout the year. As a result of this move, we will no longer have a garden center in Largo, but we cordially invite our Largo customers to visit us at Beltsville or Potomac. We think you will be impressed with the strides we are making to improve service, selection and ambiance at our garden centers

Seventy-five years is a long time. The Behnke family and hundreds of dedicated employees invite you to come in and see what's new, and help us celebrate this milestone anniversary. As we all spend more and more time in our cars and on our computers, we literally need our gardens to maintain our contact with the earth and nature. The sounds and smells of gardens evoke a primordial connection, even in the most urban of people. Come to our garden centers, stroll, plan and connect..... We will do our best to help make your gardening dreams come true. \square



The Behnke GardeNews Winter 2005 Page 3

Beyond the African Violet — Meet the Family

— by Leslie Carroll, Plant Buyer

ome of the most beautiful and easily grown plants for the home are members of the Gesneriad (pronounced either "jez-NARE-ee-ad or "guess-NARE-ee-ad) family, or Gesneriaceae in botanical Latin. The family, named for the Swiss botanist Konrad Gesner, is highly diverse, and while most of the more than 120 genera and 2000 species in the family are unfamiliar to even accomplished horticulturists, almost everyone is familiar with the African violet. Gesneriads can be found in the Americas from Mexico to Chile, in East, West and South Africa, Madagascar, Southeast Asia, Polynesia, Australia and New Zealand, China, Japan and southern Europe.

Although a number of species grow in temperate climates in mountainous regions, most gesneriads are tropical or semitropical. Gesneriads are usually grown for their blossoms and, given good light, most will bloom for long periods. Many can be grown in the average home; they are often comfortable in typical household conditions and are good candidates for the novice grower. In addition to the beautiful and well known African violets that are always available at Behnke Nurseries, you'll find several other easy-to-grow members of this family. On your next visit let us introduce you to the following African violet cousins.

Sinningia speciosa – Gloxinia

Originally from Brazil, "florist" gloxinias are grown for their showy, tubular, bell or trumpet shaped flowers. The flowers have beautifully ruffled edges and are borne well above the large, velvety leaves. To grow well and last for many years gloxinias need humidity, full sun in winter and shade in summer. To save the plant after blooming, it needs a two to four month dormant period in a cool dark spot, so that the foliage may die back to the tuber. The large leaves tend to be quite brittle, and you will want to place the plant somewhere where people



won't brush up against them. Oftentimes the plants are shipped in a semi-wilting state to prevent leaf breakage.

Aeschynanthus - Lipstick Plant

An easy to grow gesneriad, this trailing plant with thick leathery or waxy leaves is usually grown in hanging baskets. From summer to winter it bears brightly colored tubular flowers in shades of red, orange, pink or yellow. A. radicans with its red blooms extending from a purplish tubular calyx is the best known species. The flowers resemble a lipstick extended from its tube, hence the common name. Grow this plant in brightly filtered light to encourage flowering; water freely during the warm months, more sparingly in winter.

Episcia – Flame Violet, Chocolate Soldier Plants

These plants are valued for their soft, colorful, puckered foliage. Leaves are produced in short-stemmed rosettes or whorls of large leaves and on trailing runners (stolons) on which smaller leaves appear. Foliage colorations range from pale pink, white and green to dark red and chocolate brown. The brightly colored, five lobed flowers are borne singly or in small clusters from spring to autumn. Grow in

bright filtered light with high humidity. Keep evenly moist during growth and flowering, barely moist during winter.

Streptocarpella - Streptocarpella

The small, thick, often hairy leaves of streptocarpella are borne on arching stems that hang beautifully over the edge of a pot. Flowers are small but numerous, especially in summer, and range in color from pale lavender to deep purple. The more modern hybrids bloom throughout the year with only moderate light. Grow in lightly filtered bright light, keep moist during growth and flowering.

As a generalization, Gesneriads have delicate root systems that may be burned by concentrated fertilizers. Feed at the label rate (or half the label rate) with African violet food to encourage blooming.

Also, the leaves are very sensitive to water burn. This occurs when water that is 10 or 15 degrees warmer or colder than the air temperature falls on the leaf. Hence, we recommend that you water with "room temperature" or lightly warm water, and avoid wetting the leaves. (Some suggest putting water in the saucer to allow the plant to wick it up from below. Be careful with this approach, however — it is often impractical and can lead to a build up of salts and ultimately root burn).



Nematanthus - Goldfish Plant

This is another trailing gesneriad grown primarily in hanging baskets. Foliage is small and fleshy. The delightful orange pouched flowers resemble goldfish. Nematanthus need at least four hours of bright, lightly-filtered light and protection from drafts and dry air. \square



Beltsville: 301-937-1100 • Potomac: 301-983-9200

2005 Workshops & Fre

These events are held at our Beltsville location, in our Assembly R For workshops, pre-registration and pre-payment is red

When calling to reserve your seat, please include the number of the workshop or seminar.

HERBAL SOAPMAKING WORKSHOP

#WS01 Leslie Plant
Saturday, Learn to make marvelously fragrant
soaps with an assortment of natural
ingredients. (2½ hours)
\$30 fee includes all necessary
materials. Pre-registration required.

HERBAL SOAPMAKING WORKSHOP

#WS02 Leslie Plant
Saturday,
Jan. 15 soaps with an assortment of natural ingredients. (2½ hours).
\$30 fee includes all necessary

\$30 fee includes all necessary materials. Pre-registration required.

"AND THE NEXT SLIDE"

#S01 Larry Hurley; Behnke Staff
Sunday, Larry will show slides of some of the
more interesting gardens he has visited
in his travels.

PERENNIAL PLANTS PANEL

#S02 Behnke Nurseries Staff
Sunday, A panel of Behnke experts discuss
their favorite perennial plants and
answer your questions.

BIRDSEED GARDENS

#S03 Lisa Bierer-Garrett; The Great Outdoors
Saturday, Attract birds and other wildlife year
round by planting cover and food
plants in your garden.

PLANTS WITH A PURPOSE

#S04 Chris Partain; MD Native Plant Society
Saturday,
Jan. 22,
Pressure They add beauty, benefit
the environment and attract wildlife.

GARDENING AS EXERCISE

#S05 Jill Gonzalez; Behnke Staff and
Sunday, Personal Trainer

Jan. 23, Learn to use your time in the garden
to become more physically fit, and
prevent muscle strain too!

HOUSEPLANT CLINIC

#S06 We'll show you some of the worst houseplant pests, diagnose your plant's Jan. 23, problems, and suggest remedies. Bring along samples/photos.

RELIABLE ANNUALS & PERENNIALS

#S07 Janet Draper; Horticulturist, the
Saturday, Smithsonian
Jan. 29, These garden workhorses are the super
reliable plants that are chosen to
perform on the National Mall.

PLANTS ON FILM

#S08 Joe Barber; Film Critic
Saturday,
Jan. 29,
1 PM favorite flora and their appearances at the movies. (Repeated March 6.)

New Seed Varieties for 2005

#S09 Behnke Staff
Sunday, Exciting new seed introductions will be Jan. 30, discussed, and seed starting methods will be demonstrated.

CARNIVORES, BROMELIADS & CACTI, OH MY!

#S10 Susan O'Hara and Annie Williams; Sunday, Behnke Staff Jan. 30, Kids, ages 7 to 10, will love learning about these cool members of the plant kingdom. Care tips included.

ORCHIDS: BEYOND PHALAENOPSIS

#S11 Carol Allen; Orchid Expert
Saturday, Orchids make great plants for
Feb. 5, beginners. It's true! Easy orchids and
more challenging choices are discussed.

AQUATICS: PLANTS TO PONDER

#S12 Darlene Barry; Mobjack Nurseries
Saturday, Aquatics grower Darlene presents the
best plants for garden ponds, as well as
a few to avoid.

WOODY PLANTS PANEL

#S13 Behnke Nurseries Staff
Sunday, Behnke woody plants experts discuss their favorite trees and shrubs and answer your questions.

TRIED AND TRUE HOUSEPLANTS

#S14 Karen Upton; Horticulturist
Sun, Feb. Karen's favorite houseplants will turn
6, 1 PM your home into a tropical retreat.

How to Work with an Arborist

#S15 Tim Zastrow and Chris Erb; Arborists,
Saturday,
Feb. 12,
10 AM Learn when it's time to hire the
experts and how they can enhance the
health and beauty of your trees.

NATIONAL CAPITAL DAYLILY CLUB

#S16 Carol Savard; Daylily Expert
Saturday,
Feb. 12,
1 PM Discover the joys of daylilies—a
beautiful group of easy, free-flowering
perennials.

BASIC LANDSCAPE DESIGN WORKSHOP

#WS03 Jan Lowery; Second Nature, and Sunday, Behnke Staff
Feb. 13, Learn the fundamentals of landscape design in this all day workshop.
4 PM \$75 fee. Pre-registration required.

EARLY SPRING BLOOMERS

#S17 Helmut Jaehnigen; Behnke Staff
Sunday, Take advantage of a lifetime of
Feb. 13, expertise — our senior horticulturist
recommends a few gems for your yard.

ASK THE TREE EXPERTS

#S18 Tim Zastrow and Bill Dunn; Arborists,
Saturday,
Feb. 19,
10 AM (behnkes@behnkes.net) The presentation will be tailored to your concerns!

MAXIMIZE YOUR PERENNIAL GARDEN

#S19 Martha Pindale; Bluemount Nurseries
Saturday, Tips and tricks from an expert will
minimize your labor and maximize
your enjoyment.

BASIC VEGETABLE GARDENING

#S20 Cindy Brown; Green Spring Gardens Park Sunday, Dig in! Anyone can raise vegetables — Feb. 20, learn the basics and you're on your way to fresh, delicious home-growns.

GROWING GLORIOUS TOMATOES

#S21 Cindy Brown; Green Spring Gardens Park Sunday,
Feb. 20, Cindy Brown will "take you there" with lots of tips and practical advice.

STRETCHING THE LIMITS

#S22 Jim Dronenburg; Behnke Staff
Discover how a little accommodation
ensures success with desirable plants
that "don't grow here."

My South African Garden

#S23 Ellen Hornig; Seneca Hill Perennials
Saturday,
Feb 26,
1 PM experiences in her New York garden.

e Seminars at Behnke's

oom on the second floor. Seating is limited—please call to reserve a seat. quired. Please call for more information: 301-937-1100.

EVERGREENS FOR SCREENING

#S24	Miri Talabac; Behnke Nurseries Staff
Sunday,	Break the Leyland cypress habit!
Feb 27,	There are many beautiful new ways to
10 AM	increase your privacy with plants.

BUTTERFLY GARDENS

#S25	Miri Talabac; Behnke Nurseries Staff
Sunday,	Behnke's staff entomologist tells how
Feb 27,	to attract butterflies to the garden and
1 РМ	provide food and shelter for the next
	generation of butterflies.

WORKSHOP: SMALL LANDSCAPE DESIGN

#WS04	Jan Lowery; Second Nature, and
Saturday,	Behnke Staff
March 5,	Designing for the small-space gardens
8:15ам-	will be discussed in this all day
4 PM	workshop. \$75. Pre-registration
	required.

MARVELOUS MIXED BORDERS

#S26	Brenda Skarphol; Green Spring
Saturday,	Gardens Park
March 5,	Combine perennials, annuals, bulbs,
1 РМ	shrubs and trees for a dazzling mixe
	border.

DIVIDE & MULTIPLY: PROPAGATION TIPS

#S27	Terri Poindexter; Propagator, Behnke
Sunday,	Nurseries
March 6,	With just a little know how and a few
10 AM	supplies, you can produce a plethora of
	perennials and other pretty plants.

PLANTS ON FILM 2

#S28	Joe Barber; Film Critic
Sunday,	Join us for a fun discussion of our
March 6,	favorite flora and their appearances at
1 PM	the movies.

QUEEN OF THE FLOWERING VINES

#S29	Raymond Evison; Clematis Breeder
Saturday,	Don't miss world famous clematis
Mar 12,	breeder and author in a rare North
10 ам	American appearance.

HEALING HERBS

#S30 Carole Otteson; Author and Assoc. Saturday, Editor, "The American Gardener"	Mar 12, 1 _{PM}	Carole presents a talk based on her latest book, <i>Healing Herbs</i> .
#S30 Carole Otteson; Author and Assoc.	Saturday	Editor "The American Gardener"
	#S30	Carole Otteson; Author and Assoc.

ANNUAL PLANTS PANEL

#S31	Behnke Nurseries Staff	#,
Sunday,	A panel of Behnke Nurseries experts	Si
Mar 13,	discuss their favorite annuals and	M
10 ам	answer your questions.	1

HARDY FERNS FOR THE MID-ATLANTIC

#S32	Diane Lewis; Brookside Gardens
Sunday,	You'll love the exciting new ferns,
Mar 13,	both native and exotic species, that
1 PM	thrive in our gardening region.

WHAT'S GOING ON DOWN THERE?

#S33	Tim Zastrow and Christopher Larkin;
Saturday,	Arborists, Bartlett Tree Experts
Mar 19,	Discover the secret life of roots—
10 AM	where tree health begins. Maintaining
	soil health encourages healthy trees.

NEW ROSES AND HOW TO GROW THEM

#S34	Doug Ford; Jackson and Perkins
Saturday,	Roses
Mar 19,	There's always something new in the
1 PM	world of rose breeders. Hear all about
	the best of the introductions.

ALL ABOUT EASTER LILIES

#S35	Behnke Staff
Sunday,	Learn the rich history surrounding the
Mar 20,	Easter lily as well as information about
10 ам	growing them successfully at home.

f Hummingbird Gardens

#S36	Lisa Bierer-Garrett; The Great Outdoors
Sunday,	Delight to these "flying flowers" as
Mar 20,	they frequent your garden to visit their
1 PM	favorite food sources.

NATIVE PLANTS FOR THE LANDSCAPE

#S37	Dr. Sara Tangren, Chesapeake Native
Saturday,	Nurseries
Mar 26,	Discover the best local native plants to
10 ам	use in your garden— and restore your
	own little piece of Maryland.

WONDERFUL WOODY PLANTS

#S38	Phil Normandy; Brookside Gardens
Saturday,	A Brookside Gardens woody plant
Mar 26,	expert discusses some of his favorite
1 PM	plants for the mid-Atlantic garden

A BRIEF HISTORY OF BEHNKE TIME

#S39	John Peter Thompson; Behnke Staff
Sunday,	The story of Behnke Nurseries is a
Mar 27,	classic tale of European immigrants
10 AM	realizing their dreams in America.

INVASIVE PLANIS: LITTLE CROP OF HORRORS

#S40	John Peter Thompson; Behnke Staff
Sunday,	John traces the history of our garden-
Mar 27,	ing traditions, plant exploration, and
1 PM	the appearance of (gasp!) invasive
	ornamental plants.

GARDENING TO PROTECT THE BAY

#S41	Carole Ann Barth; Environmental
Saturday,	Planner
April 2,	Learn how you can have a beautiful
10 AM	garden accent and reduce runoff to the
	Chesapeake Bay at the same time.

SUCCESS WITH CAMELLIAS

#S42	Dr. Bill Ackerman, Camellia Society of
Saturday,	the Potomac Valley
April 2,	Learn basics of camellia culture, and
1 РМ	discover the cold-hardy cultivars which
	were developed by Dr. Ackerman.

FROM ANNUALS TO ZUCCESS!

#S43	Eric Morrison; Horticulturist
Sunday,	Eric demonstrates his talent for
April 3,	creating beautiful potted gardens.
10 ам	Discover his tricks of the trade.

BIG, BOLD CONTAINER GARDENS

#S44	Eric Morrison; Horticulturist
Sunday,	Mix bold foliage plants with flowers in
April 3,	containers to create a splashy accents
1 PM	for your deck or patio.

HOSTAS FOR THE MARYLAND GARDEN

#S45	Randy Best; Behnke Staff
Saturday,	Back by popular demand, "Mr. Hosta"
April 9,	will expound on his very favorite topic
10 AM	— perennial hosta plants.

THE CHEF'S ESSENTIAL HERBS

	#S46	Roger Zinn; Behnke Staff and
)	Saturday,	Professional Chef
	April 9,	Plant herbs to enhance your meals all
	1 PM	year round, and pick up tips to use in
		the kitchen and in the garden.

GARDENING FOR THE MID-ATLANTIC STATES

#S48	Andre Viette; Radio Personality/Author
Sunday,	Andre, a popular speaker, lays out a
April 10,	monthly plan for successful gardening
1 PM	as described in his new book.

YESTERDAY, TODAY AND TOMORROW

#S49	Dave Culp; Sunny Border Nurseries
Saturday,	Dave discusses all of the "Perennial
April 16,	Plants of the Year" and improved
1 PM	varieties now available.

Shrubs and Trees to Enliven Your Winter Garden

- by Miri Talabac, Woody Plants Specialist; Entomologist; Certified Professional Horticulturist.

he garden in winter may not immediately strike someone as a place for color and interest. The showy flowers of spring are waiting out the cold, tucked away in their buds. But some plants, including many shrubs, put forth their floral display despite freezing temperatures and snowy days, and would delight anyone giving them a thoughtful home in the garden. Even those that are not in flower yet can still give unexpected elements of interest.

Some of the earliest-blooming shrubs are the most familiar, and were also amongst Mr. Behnke's favorite plants. Just as he encouraged the planting of pansies for winter color, Mr. Behnke promoted the use of winter-blooming shrubs to fill in the gap in the flowering year. Among his top choices are witchhazel, winter hazel, winter

jasmine, winter daphne, and heath.

Witchhazel hybrids open their vibrant spidery flowers as early as late January. The blooms cover the stems to outline the branches with bright color, and are spectacular when backlit by the lowlying sun. Some varieties even have a delicately sweet fragrance, such as 'Angelly' and 'Primavera' (yellow), 'Jelena' (copper-orange) and 'Diane' (red). 'Arnold Promise' is yellow with a fragrance reminiscent of lemon. Witchhazel's

Witchhazel's relative, winter hazel, has hanging clusters

Flowering

of fragrant yellow bell-shaped flowers that open in early spring. Both plants do well in a moist, well-drained soil with light midday shade.

Although commonly used as an early explosion of color, the cheery yellow profusion of forsythia is actually preceded by winter jasmine. The unscented flowers resemble forsythia and bloom on green stems from late January until March. Its growth habit is low with arching stems, and is well suited for cascading down sunny stone walls or slopes.

Throughout the winter months into the spring, heaths provide low mounds of color, even when dusted with snow. Like heathers, which bloom in the fall, heaths cover themselves with small pastel flowers in rose, purple, pink and white; some varieties also feature foliage tinged blue or gold. Their fine leaves and profuse flower spikes impart a soft texture to the garden and appear to paint the landscape when planted *en masse*. They are very coldhardy, requiring slightly acidic, well-drained soil in full sun.

Camellias are a diverse enough group to surround winter with blooms all by themselves. The "fall-blooming" *Camellia sasanqua* and *C. oleifera* cultivars will begin flowering in autumn and continue into early winter. "Spring-blooming" *C. japonica* cultivars will pick up the slack in mid-winter and continue flowering into spring. Many varieties are now available for reliable cold-hardiness. All prosper with moist, well-drained, acidic soil and shelter from strong afternoon sun.

Another well-known shrub, flowering quince blooms from late winter through early spring in shades of scarlet, apricot, and white. Plants can be sited in sun as unsheared hedges or barriers, as some varieties possess spines on their branches. In mid-winter branches can also be cut and forced indoors for cheerful arrangements.

Consider using fragrance to add another dimension to the winter garden. As witchhazel blooms continue their show, winter daphne's rosy-white flower clusters perfume the landscape in February and March. Daphne performs best in well-drained soil in partial sun, and planted near a walk or entrance, the delightful scent can be enjoyed often. To continue the sweet aromas in the shadier part of the garden, use Himalayan sweetbox, an evergreen groundcover that blooms discreetly from early March into April. Around the same time, Japanese skimmia emits a spicy scent from white flower clusters on the branch tips, with the male plants being the most fragrant. In late March, mahonias (grapehollies) open their yellow flower clusters and release their own delicate scent.

Flowers, however, despite their flamboyance, aren't the only way to brighten the winter landscape. Consider the longerlasting color from "redtwig" dogwoods. Their stems flushed in red, coral, peach and yellow add standout accents in front of dark evergreens or against a new snow. Use their colors to contrast or harmonize with evergreens that change color in the colder months, such as some blue-foliaged junipers or Atlantic whitecedar. Similarly, the bare stems of the 'Flame' white willow intensify their orange color into a twiggy winter fire. Group several together for the best effect. The young stems of coralbark maple also turn blazing coral.

For more subtle bark interest, use trees with exfoliating bark. Paperbark maple develops peeling bark that glows copper when backlit by the sun. River birch bark rolls into cinnamon curls over smooth inner buff. Lacebark pine, Japanese stewartia and sycamore have flaking bark, creating mosaics of gray, olive, cream and rosy brown.

Other points of interest include buds and berries. Pussy willows have their peak season in late winter, as the return of milder weather exposes silver or black petable fuzz. Cut branches in mid-winter for forcing indoors in warm water. Berries are also excellent splashes of color, and some can last the entire winter season, if the birds don't enjoy them first! Excellent candidates

continued next page

Items of Interest to Gardeners

Tune in to our **new Radio Show** in February 2005! Listen every Saturday from 9AM to 11AM, on WMET1160 on the AM dial. You'll enjoy many topics of interest to gardeners, and opportunities to call in and speak with our experts.

Job Fairs — work where you love to shop! Saturday, February 12, 2005

9 AM to 2 PM, at Largo Production.

Wednesday, March 2, 2005

5 PM to 8 PM, at Beltsville and Potomac.

Saturday March 5, 2005

9 AM to 5 PM, at Beltsville and Potomac.

For more information, visit our website: www.behnkes.com

Coming Spring 2005: **Kids Corner.** Youngsters will get a lesson and hands-on projects to introduce them to the joys of gardening and the natural world. Watch this space for more details in the next issue of GardeNews.

The Montgomery County Master Gardeners will present a **Spring Gardening Conference** on Saturday, February 26, at the Montgomery County Cooperative Extension, 18410 Muncaster Road, Derwood, Maryland 20855.

For both the beginning gardener and the more experienced, the program will offer sessions on pruning, propagating from seeds, controlling garden pests and organic vegetable growing. Other topics will include creating the year-round garden, planting a wildlife habitat, the use of tropical plants and everything you need to know about raising azaleas and rhododendrons.

The conference will be held from 8:30 AM to 3:00 PM at the Extension offices. Cost is \$35 and includes lunch and materials.

Call the Montgomery County Master Gardeners for more info: 301-590-2836.

Shrubs and Trees, from page 6

include nandina, holly and red chokeberry (red), pyracantha (red or orange), juniper (blue), beautyberry (neon violet or white), and bayberry (white-waxed blue-gray). Some rarer varieties of nandina and holly offer yellow berries

to add to the spectrum.

Lastly, winter outlines can add artful winter interest. Harry Lauder's walkingstick, another of Mr. Behnke's winter favorites, has picturesque contorted stems and branches. 'Flying Dragon' hardyorange is an artfully twisting sculpture with arching thorns to match. Japanese maples, particularly the laceleaf types, develop twisting, curving trunks and branches, and old

trunks and branches, and old specimens are beautiful natural bonsai. Grow these plants in a sunny location with moist, acidic, well-drained soil.

Whether from flowers, fruit, bark or shape, shrubs with winter interest should be a part of every garden to contribute to year-long appeal.

Editor's Note: Many of these shrubs are in stock now at our Beltsville store, and the plants really start to roll in in March, when you'll find the best selection. Plan and plant now to develop your own four-season garden.

Potomac Store Receives Workforce & Economic Development Award



Gary Ingram (center) accepts his award, which was presented by Lester Coffey (left), Chair-Montgomery County Workforce Investment Board and David Edgerly, Montgomery County Workforce & Economic Development.

Each year, the Montgomery County Workforce and Economic Development Council recognizes businesses that have consistently exhibited a commitment to workforce development through creative hiring practices.

This year, Behnke Nurseries was honored with the Agricultural Employer Award for the Potomac store's efforts in providing a job opportunity to an individual with multiple barriers to employment. The individual visited our Potomac store with a customized employment career specialist at the Montgomery Works One Stop Career Center. Potomac store manager Mike Behnke, and co-manager Gary Ingram determined that his interests and skills could be utilized in performing several needed duties at the nursery. He was hired as a Nursery Associate and now works two days per week.

Behnke's has a long-standing positive relationship with the disability community. For years we have provided work experiences and opportunities to high school students with disabilities, in addition to working in partnership with local disability employment service providers in Prince George's and Montgomery Counties.

Congratulations to Mike, Gary and the Potomac store team for their work and efforts that resulted in receiving this prestigious award!



Witchhazel

Beltsville: 301-937-1100 • Potomac: 301-983-9200

Get a Jump Start on a Spring Landscape Design!

Behnke Nurseries Landscape Design & Installation Division

t's too cold outside to garden, but it's the ideal time to think about a new landscape design! Schedule an appointment now with the talented professional designers at Behnke's. A top quality design will add beauty and value to your home, and provide your family with years of enjoyment.

Behnke Nurseries Landscape Design & Installation Division is located at our Beltsville store and offers a wide range of landscape services, including consultations, finished landscape designs, the installation of plants and the construction of garden features such as walkways, retaining walls, patios and much more.

A design consultation includes a visit to your home by a member of the design team to discuss the planting site and planting themes. A finished design is customized, drawn to scale, and personalized to your home architecture and personal tastes.

Beat the spring rush. Consultations and designs scheduled now will be first in line for installation as soon as spring arrives!

Contact us by phone:

301-937-1100, ext. 308 or by email:

landscaping@behnkes.net for details and to schedule an appointment. See our landscape design at the

45th Annual Washington Home & Garden Show

Thursday through Sunday, March 17-20, 2005, at the new Washington DC Convention Center!

www.washingtonhomeandgardenshow.com

Suburban, MD Permit No. 1136

PRSRT STD U.S. POSTAGE 11300 Baltimore Ave. Beltsville, MD 20705-1923

