

Fall 2005

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Let's Talk Trees

A newsletter from Northwest Plant Health Care, Inc.

What's New

As many of you know, we have added landscaping to our line of services. This addition and the continued growth in our Plant Health Care and General Tree Care divisions, has taken us from a small company to a medium sized tree care and landscaping company.

Kate and I see the growth, in combination with entering our tenth year of business, a good opportunity to be focused on our key values. We are very conscious of making sure we keep what has given our clients faith in us so that we will continue to please you.

We are currently putting into writing what has been our guide since we started.

"Visions and Culture"

- NPHC exists to create beautiful, healthy plants and landscapes in the Inland NW
- NPHC uses what is best for the client, the plant and the company to guide our work
- NPHC fosters long term relationships with clients and employees (& their families)

"Values"

- NPHC is ethical, honest and trustworthy, utilizing our expertise to do what we say we'll do
- NPHC is loyal, going the extra mile to maintain positive mutually-beneficial relationships

While we expect that our growth will level out, it is of great importance to us that others we entrust as NPHC staff know our dedication to quality plant care and exceptional service. Speaking of new staff, we are always looking for dedicated professionals. We know you, our core clients, and your referrals are our past, present and future. Thank you for your confidence. Continue to give us your input; we greatly appreciate it. See you at the Fall Leaf Festival!

In Care of Trees,

Joe Zubaly

President

Mark your Calendars!

Home Idea Show

October 7th, 8th, 9th

Spokane Fair & Expo Center

Friday: 12- 8pm Saturday: 10am-8pm Sunday: 10am- 5pm

We have "two for one" tickets for admission into this fall home & garden show, call the office and we'll mail them to you! See you there!

Landscaping with Trees & Shrubs:

WSU Master Gardeners Classes: 9/24, 10/1, 10/15, 10/22

222 N. Havana St.

Saturdays 10am-Noon

Call 509-477-2048 to sign up for one or all four of these great classes.

Annual Fall Leaf Festival

John A. Finch Arboretum

October 15th

11am-2pm

Featuring a huge leaf pile to jump in, this family oriented festival is free and features informational booths and a tree planting demonstration.



Utilizing our air spade we were able to successfully transplant a mature 20' x 25' Japanese Maple from one neighbors yard to another's in February. It is thriving in it's new home. Yes, we had a lot of fun!

Purposeful Pruning

Proper pruning decisions are based on researched findings, not an individual's eye alone. Trees are dynamic biological organisms and informed proper pruning positively affects their future health, growth and aesthetics.

Proper Pruning decisions are based on the specific tree's function, form and culture.

The function of a tree influences our pruning decisions. The goal is to create a strong trunk with sturdy well-spaced branches. The strength of branches depends on the relative sizes of the branches, the branch angles, and the spacing of the limbs. Some branches are determined to be temporary but will be maintained while the tree is still young. Radial balance is achieved with permanent branches growing outward in each direction.

The form of a tree covers many of the practical hands-on techniques. Keeping a main leader by eliminating or reducing branches (that are competing for dominance) improves strength. Removal or reduction of lateral branches inordinately sized in proportion to the main stem reduces weakness. Thinning can achieve proper branch spacing, opening foliage, weight reduction or increasing light and air penetration. However, keep in mind that removal of too many leaves can starve the tree reducing growth. Removing dead, diseased or dying limbs is good practice.

A lot of deadwood or deadwood located on the branch ends can warrant further investigation for possible transplant shock, girdling roots or winter injury and may preclude pruning decisions. Directional pruning can ensure filling of vacancies. Topping is unwise as it could cause decay, sunburn, hazards, unsightliness and added expense. When necessary, crown reduction can be performed by cutting branches back to an appropriately-sized lateral limb.

The culture of a tree also effects pruning decisions. Certain species lend themselves to a particular form. The age of a tree greatly effects the pruning decisions. Only corrective pruning should be done to newly planted trees. Younger trees will tolerate the removal of a higher percentage of living tissue than mature trees. A tree can recover from several small pruning wounds faster than from one large wound. Mature trees should require less routine pruning. Other cultural issues considered are: vigor, growing conditions, clearance, disease or insect activity and the expected pruning cycle.

A NPHC, Inc Certified Arborist is able to discuss your particular trees' needs and what action they will be taking so that you can compare the value of service you are receiving. Give us a call to catch up on your pruning needs this dormant season.

To Do Now

- Dispose of fallen fruit or leaves with disease problems
- Schedule your fall application for season long insect control in 2006
- Keep your sprinkler system on until just before freezing

"Thanks for all your hard work. I'm so happy with the finished product. You were a delight to work with!!"

D.F., Spokane, WA

Ben's Bistro

Ben shares one of his favorite ethnic dishes for the fall.

Kung Po Chicken

Serves 3

2 skinless boneless chicken breasts (approx. 12-14oz.)
1 egg white 2 teaspoons corn starch ½ tsp. salt
2 tbsp. yellow salted beans or miso (preferably mugi miso)
1 tbsp. hoisin sauce 1 tsp. light brown sugar
1 tbsp. rice wine or med dry sherry 4 garlic cloves, crushed
2/3 c. chicken stock 3 tbsp. peanut or sunflower oil
2-3 dried chilies, broken into small pieces
4 oz. roasted cashews chopped & fresh cilantro to garnish

1) Cut the chicken into bite-sized pieces. Whisk the egg white in a bowl, whisk in the cornstarch and salt, then add the chicken and stir until coated.

2) In a separate bowl, mash the beans with a spoon to make a rough paste (unless substituting miso). Stir in the hoisin sauce, brown sugar, rice wine or sherry, garlic and chicken stock.

3) Heat a wok or deep-sided sauté pan, add the oil and then fry the chicken, turning constantly for about 2 minutes, until lightly browned. Drain over a bowl to collect the excess oil.

4) Heat the reserved oil and fry the chili pieces for about 1 minute. Return the chicken to the wok and pour in the bean sauce mixture. Bring to a boil and stir in the cashew nuts. Spoon into a serving dish and garnish with cilantro.

This dish is a staple at most Chinese restaurants. It serves well accompanied by fried rice or stir-fried vegetables. You can also stir-fry onion and red bell pepper before adding the cooked chicken back into the wok, and serve with a side of steamed white rice. Chilies can be added or subtracted per your personal liking.

Miso can be found in the cold case of many grocery stores although I highly suggest a trip to an Asian market for the more adventurous. Enjoy!

“Ask The

Q: My neighbor’s large tree fell down in the wind storm and I have a lot of very tall trees. Should I remove them?

A: Your tree’s height alone is not reason enough to reach the conclusion to remove it. In fact, a tall tree can be a sign that it is strong. A knowledgeable ISA Certified Arborist can evaluate if your tree needs to be removed by looking at factors that may predispose your tree as “hazardous”. Together, we would consider each tree’s:

- 1) Previous care (or lack of)
- 2) Lean
- 3) Multiple trunks
- 4) Weakly Attached Branches
- 5) Cavities & Decay Pockets
- 6) Trunk & Branch Cracks
- 7) Hangers
- 8) Deadwood.

All of these factors combined give a good indication of a tree’s health and longevity. Although removal is an option, there are other options available for increasing your tree’s longevity, including pruning and cabling.

Q: I’m concerned about fertilizing my trees so late in the season. Won’t it cause growth that I don’t want now?

A: Fertilizing should be done “by prescription” so the appropriate product is used for the appropriate purpose considering species, age, site and expected results. Fall fertilizing is done as the tree goes into dormancy so it is unlikely the tree will push new growth especially if the correct fertilizers are being applied in the correct amounts. Fall fertilizing should be a slow-release formulation that will give steady feeding over twelve months. The proper fertilizer in the fall will establish vigorous root growth. Strengthening a tree’s roots is helpful to mature trees to sustain their health and vigor. It also benefits younger trees which may be struggling due to recent planting or weakness from pests or disease.

A Cool Crowd

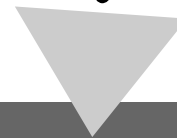
Master Gardeners are a well rounded, knowledgeable group of horticulturalists who are interesting folks to learn with and from! The WSU Master Gardeners are university-trained volunteers who serve as educators in their communities, specifically serving home gardeners. To get more information on how to become one, see their outstanding website: www.spokane-county.wsu.edu To get questions answered or find resources, contact their office at the Plant Clinic, Spokane County Extension Education Center, 222 N. Havana, Spokane (509) 477-2181. University of Idaho also has an Extension Office in Cd’A staffed by Master Gardeners: 1000 W. Hubbard, Suite 140 or (208) 446-1680.



Who’s hot

Paul Heindl

is our multi-talented General Tree Work Division Manager. He oversees the scheduling and accomplishing of our pruning, removals, stump grinding and cabling/bracing services. Paul also helps Joe with sales calls. Paul is an ISA Certified Arborist who enjoys making trees look their best by performing the highest quality tree care available. His knowledge and professional attitude, coupled with a safe and productive crew, continues to exceed clients’ expectations. Paul and his wife, Shannon, enjoy fixing up their new home and property, boating, camping, hiking and playing pool. When he gets the chance, you’ll find Paul under the hood of his 1967 El Camino.



what’s Not...

Waiting to be called back or not being serviced at all by landscapers because of the large construction boom. We are hearing this repeatedly on the phone. People are calling us because other companies are too busy to service them. Yes, because of our size, we can perform much smaller landscape construction jobs than most other companies. We have stayed steady but aren’t overly busy because we cater to our existing clients and referrals. Working in established landscapes for ten years, we are comfortable with revisions. We always provide personalized service and a hand-crafted beautiful landscape. Get your projects done before the snow flies by calling us now!

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www.NorthwestPlantHealthCare.com

Ben's Bistro!
To Do Now
Upcoming Events
What's New
A Cool Crowd
Ask The Tree Care
Experts: Q & A
Who's Hot?
What's Not?
This issue:
Proper Pruning
Planting Series:
Selecting High
Quality Trees

Feel free to submit us a question for our next newsletter. We'd be glad to mail our newsletter to anyone. Contact us with a subscriber's address or any comments or questions at: nphc@icehouse.net Editor: Kate Zubaly

Planting Series: Selecting High Quality Plants

Let's start at the top and see what the leaves should look like. Trees in containers are typically fertilized at a high rate so if they have yellow, wilting or small leaves, chances are you don't want to inherit whatever problem the tree is facing. Stunted leaf size or slight variations in color are not that big of an issue when looking at balled and burlapped plants. Because of their size, some stress is expected and they aren't as heavily fertilized. Next, you want a tree with strong form and well-spaced, firmly attached branches. Twigs, branches and stems should be inspected visually for bleeding lesions, cankers (sunken areas), mechanical injuries and boring holes. A few broken branches typically are not a big deal but avoid many broken branches or incorrect pruning cuts. The main stem should be primarily free of blemishes. Tree trunks on large shade trees should be relatively straight. For shade trees, a good rule is that 2/3 of the foliage or green leafy tissue should be located on the bottom 1/2 of the tree. This should supply good taper to support the upper canopy. When purchasing ornamentals, avoid weak branch unions associated with acute branch angles and multiple crotch areas. After looking up and out, it's time to look down to the roots. The root flare should be visible. The root ball should be adequately sized, about 10-12 times the size of

the trunk diameter as measured 4 inches above the root flare. Pull roots out of the pot or unwind the burlap. If it is loose in its pot or ball, move on. The other extreme is a circling mass of roots that can't be untangled from being in a pot too long. Ask the nursery owner "How long has the plant been here?" If it has been "healed in" for the entire season, you should see strong root growth, some starting to exit the ball or starting to bind up in the pot. Major roots should not be cut or damaged. Nurseries will have a better selection, more knowledgeable staff and better cared for trees than a



Choosing a strong tree from the start will pay off!