

Summer 2006

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A newsletter from Northwest Plant Health Care, Inc.

Let's Talk Trees

Ethics Loyalty Integrity Quality of Life

What's New

It is hard to believe we are celebrating our 10th anniversary in business this June! When Kate and I moved here in November of 1995 from Philadelphia, (immediately after our visit here on our honeymoon) we had no idea we would venture into starting our own business. It was after a season of tree care (and an ice storm) that we realized that there were no companies practicing Plant Health Care (PHC). Having just left a position in which I ran a PHC division for Bartlett Tree Experts, it seemed a natural fit for me to provide those same services here in our new home. After some research, we invested in our first spray rig and a computer, painted my 1989 Chevy and went for it!



1996



2006


THEN and NOW



1996



2006

Our new Administrative Assistant, Beth Ganick, who is a QuickBooks wiz and terrific on the phone, did some cost comparisons from ten years ago just for fun. By searching on Google, this is what she found: 

We started our company with the same goals as we still hold dear today: to provide informed quality care for landscapes, give exceptional client service and run our company ethically. Thank you for choosing us to provide your tree and landscape care. We greatly appreciate your referrals over the years, which have allowed us to celebrate this landmark. Enjoy the beautiful days of summer!

Products & Services	1996	2006	%+
Gasoline - Price per gallon	\$ 1.42	\$ 2.96	108%
Ave. home in Kootenai Co.	\$ 96,788	\$182,982	89%
Chevy S-10 Pickup 4x4	\$ 11,610	\$ 20,495	77%
Plumbing by man hour	\$ 48	\$ 83	72%
NPHC Pruning by man hour	\$ 45	\$ 65	44%
Avg. home in Spokane Co.	\$118,200	\$169,400	43%

In Care of Trees,
Joe Zubaly
President

A Cool Crowd

We are going to be bold and say that the fine group of professionals pictured above,
Top Left: **Jenny, Jamie, Victor, Paul, Ben, Beth, Rusty, Shauna, Thorin, James, Scott** Bottom Left: **Ben, Kate, Joe, Lauren, Becky**, known as the staff of NPHC Inc., are a very cool crowd. We are privileged to work with such skilled, passionate Arborists. We want to keep them busy year round and are

looking for your ideas on what type of project or service we could provide through the winter months. **Clients, please take a minute to fill out the enclosed survey.** Otherwise, contact us by email (nphc@icehouse.net), phone (509-892-0110 or 208-687-2884) or mail. The most applicable or original idea, which we can implement, will **WIN A GRAND PRIZE!**

YOUR NEW TREE: OFF TO A GOOD START

The three basics to encouraging new tree establishment are: watering, staking and fertilizing.

How much water a tree needs depends on the type of tree it is and its rate of water use (evapotranspiration or ET). ET is the total amount of water used by the tree as it takes in nutrients and controls its internal temperature transpired plus the water lost through the soil (evaporated). Many factors effect a tree's ET rate, including the daily temperature, exposure, soil type, age and establishment of the tree.

Because ball and burlap (B&B) trees lose many of their roots during the packaging process, it is essential that our watering practices encourage new root growth. The most conservative way to water is with drip irrigation or soaker hoses. Placing these in the area directly above the root ball of a freshly planted tree will provide the roots with adequate water. As the roots grow, the water source should be moved outward to encourage radial root expansion. Since most B&B trees are packaged in a clay soil, and clay holds more water than our native soils, roots grow from areas of lower water potential to higher water potential. By strategically placing supplemental water away from the clay root ball, we can encourage the roots to grow out in search of

water. In this way, we can minimize the development of girdling roots that can eventually be the death of a much-admired tree.

In general, keep the soil moist, but not soaked, by **watering** thoroughly about once or twice a week (more so in hot weather). If unsure, take a trowel or small spade and dig in the root area about 8-10 inches deep. If the soil is dry, it's time to water. Heavy less frequent watering is more beneficial to the tree than light, frequent waterings.

Another way to encourage root establishment is to provide sturdiness to your new tree by **staking**. This will keep the root ball from moving, especially in windy areas. Stake the windward side (frequently the SW aspect) and then one or two others, depending on the size of your tree.

Fertilizing is generally not recommended for the first season of growth since you are more interested in root growth rather than canopy leaf expansion when establishing a tree. The next spring, utilize a fertilizer with higher nitrogen to encourage top growth. The care you invest into your new trees will make a big difference in their quality. Once your tree has grown a few seasons, have a Certified Arborist help you prune it for structure while it is still young.

To Do Now

- Scale insects of all types have become a real issue. Plants to watch: Oaks, Ornamental pines, Juniper (especially those in the shade) Maples, Ash, Plum, Yew and Aspen.
- Be aware of the use of weed and feed products and the potential for harm to trees and shrubs. Always read and follow the label directions on any pesticide, it will help to prevent unintended consequences.

Kate's Cuisine

Ben's Bistro will return in the fall!

Sweet Poppy Salad

- 8 c. Ripped mixed greens
- 1 c. Red seedless grapes, cut in half
- 1 c. Pecans, broken into med. pieces
- 3/4 c. Crumbled feta cheese

*Dressing (makes 2 cups)

- 3/4 c. Sugar
- 1 tsp Mustard powder
- 1 tsp Salt
- 1/3 c. Cider vinegar
- 1 Tbsp Onion juice
- 1 c. Vegetable oil
- 1.5 Tbsp Poppy Seeds



1. Whisk together all of the dressing ingredients and refrigerate for 2-3 hours. The *dressing makes a large quantity. You

may half the recipe if you like or it lasts two - three weeks in the fridge.

2. Wash greens and prep the other three ingredients. Keep separate until shortly before served.
3. To serve, mix all salad ingredients and toss well with *4 oz of dressing. Use more or less dressing to taste.

- This salad can be made with almost any fruit, nut or cheese. Some of my favorite substitutions are: mandarin oranges with dried cranberry, sweetened sliced almonds and crumbled blue

cheese.

- I love to bring this to barbeques, as most people enjoy it.
- It is great with crusty sour dough bread.

"We were so impressed with your crew and the work they did on our trees. They are not only skilled and highly competent but also artists of their craft. Our trees look magnificent and the place was left clean and we are most appreciative."

L.S. & L.W.,
Spokane, WA

Mark your Calendars

Backyard Wildlife Nature/Sustainable Garden Tour

June 25th 11am-3pm 3 public sites & 12 residences

Tickets \$5 at WSU Ext., 222 N. Havana, Info: 509-477-2048

Cd'A Garden Club's Tour "Woodland Enchantments"

July 23rd 9:30am-4:00pm

Tickets at local nurseries \$25, benefits Charities

Info: 208-772-3148

Lavender Fields Forever Festival

July 22nd and 23rd 10am-6pm

Informative, artisans, music, relaxation

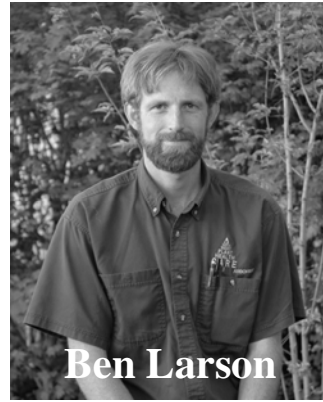
www.NorthwestLavenderGuild.org

Friends of Manito Fall Perennial & Plant Sale

September 9th 10am-4pm, East of Gaiser Conservatory

Terrific selection, proceeds benefit the park

Info: 509-456-8038



Ben Larson

Who's
hot

Ben joined our team three years ago with a degree in Biology and experience in farming, field research logging bird species and caring for orchard trees. Within his first year, he earned his ISA Arborist Certification. His hard work and dedication to learning his craft has made him an expert climber and pruner. Ben especially likes working here at NPHC because of the people he works with and his love for climbing big trees. He enjoys the creative aspect of landscaping and over-seeing an area being transformed. Both clients and co-workers alike say it's a pleasure to work with Ben. His hobbies consist of a variety of outdoor activities, including hiking and gardening. He and his wife, Shaura, are enjoying their new home in Post Falls.

"Ask The

Q: My Rhodie has leaves that are notched on the edges, what is this?

A: I suspect that you have Black Vine Weevil (BVW). The larvae are most harmful to the plant because they feed on the roots causing girdling and yellowing of the leaves. The adults cause the esthetic value of your plant to decrease by chewing on the edges of leaves, creating the signature notching effect that can be nothing else but BVW. For our Plant Health Care clients, we utilize a vapor barrier as a preventative method on susceptible plants and if the BVW is active, we utilize an insecticide on the bottom 1/3 of the plant and trunk to solve the problem.

Q: My friend is a Master Gardener and she said my Maple suffered from frost injury, how do I know?

A: There were many plants effected by one of several late frosts this year. We had warmer weather earlier this year that was followed by some cold spells, which increases the chance of frost injury because certain plants had already broken their dormancy stage. The effected tissue on the plant is located on the twigs and buds at the ends of the branches. Bud death without expansion, branch dieback and distorted emerging leaves are all signs of frost injury. The prognosis is good and the treatment is easy, namely pruning out the dead tissue once the tree has leafed out.

Special thanks to contributing writers:

**Thorin Brown, Ben Kappen,
Ben Larsen, and Becky Phillips**

What's Not?

OAK LECANIUM SCALE

is being found in heavy populations around the Inland Northwest. The adult scale insects appear as convex blisters oriented on the twigs just behind this year's twig elongation. This type of armored scale is named for the armor like shell coating on the adults. This shell makes the timing for control critical. The best control is available when the crawlers emerge out onto the new growth because they are soft-bodied at that time. If left untreated, the scale will deplete the tree of vigor and can cause the tree to appear unsightly. You will see sooty mold on the twigs, possibly a chlorotic (yellowing) look and a thinner canopy, smaller than normal leaves and increased deadwood within the canopy. The tree, in this weakened state, is susceptible to other pests and diseases. Without control, the pest can kill portions of a tree or the tree in its entirety. We treat mild to moderate infestations with sprays of soaps and oils and heavier infestations with a trunk injection of a fast-acting systemic insecticide for longer residual control and no off target application. Once we have begun treatment, it is a good idea to prune out any deadwood to be able to monitor the insect population.

Northwest Plant Health Care, Inc.

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www.NorthwestPlantHealthCare.com

Kate's Cuisine
To Do Now
Upcoming Events
What's New
A Cool Crowd
Ask The Tree Care
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Who's Hot?
What's Not?
This issue:
Pruning of Flowering
Trees and Shrubs
New Trees: A Good Start

Plant Health Care - Insect & Disease Management - Fertilizing
Pruning - Removals - Landscape Design & Installation

Pruning of Flowering Trees and Shrubs

As spring advances into summer everyone is aware of the many beautiful flowering plants around us. Whether your trees and shrubs flowered particularly well or rather poorly may be a result of the pruning that was done in the past.

Probably the most important thing to consider when pruning flowering plants is timing and this can be different depending on the desired outcome and the species considered. Pruning flowering trees and shrubs should be done in accordance with their blooming habits. Plants that bloom in summer or fall, on the current years growth, must be pruned in winter. Pruning these in the winter will allow the growth during the spring to push the summer blossoms (some fruit trees may be an exception for the purpose of thinning branches with blossoms in order to reduce the weight of forming fruit). If, however, the plant blooms in the spring on last years growth, pruning should occur after blooms begin to die. This will ensure that flower buds set during the growing year are not removed before they have a chance to bloom in the spring.

Rhododendrons are an excellent example of shrubs that flower on last years growth. Pruning rhodies to maintain shape and structure may be done in winter or spring but keep it light as pre-bloom pruning is likely to remove some of the flowers. Cuts on rhododendrons should always be made just above leaf rosettes since new growth emerges from dormant eyes there. The best time to prune for

maximum bloom is just after flowering. To keep plants healthy and productive, a regular program of pinching shoots and cutting flowers should be implemented. When removing spent flowers it is important not to harm the growth buds below flowers.

In general, special care must be taken when pruning outside of the dormant season as plants are particularly susceptible to fungal diseases, especially plants in the order *prunus*. Be sure the person pruning your tree is sterilizing the pruning equipment between cuts. The timing of pruning is also dependent on the type of pruning being done. If plants are trained for proper branching structure and shape from an early age, later pruning chores will be limited to removal of deadwood and one can focus on pruning to encourage flowering. If, however, rejuvenation of an overgrown shrub is desired, pruning is best done in late winter or early spring. Though blossoming in the spring may be inhibited, the trade-off is a healthier, more vigorous shrub.



Cornus Kousa