

# Let's Talk Trees



Ethics Loyalty Integrity Quality of Life

## From Joe...what's new

While it seems like winter would be our "down time," the truth is we've been staying plenty busy while the temperature dips. Here is the latest.

### Streamlined communication

We now have an automated phone system. We made this change for several reasons, the most important being our focus on providing clients with the best customer service possible. When you call we want to ensure you are being seamlessly directed to the person you want to speak with. But never fear, if the system isn't your cup of tea you can always opt for the famous "press zero" to immediately speak with Shauna, our Office Manager. Her 10 year anniversary is this June and she knows everything!



### The top 5%

Check this out! Thanks to all of your positive reviews, Angie's list, the popular consumer referral website, has presented us with the 2011 Super Service Award, an award given to only 5% of all the businesses reviewed on the site. This award backs up our promise to you of exceptional client service and confirms you are doing business with one of the highest rated companies in the nation. Not a member? Jump on the bandwagon at [angieslist.com](http://angieslist.com). And speaking of connecting online, we plan to launch a Facebook page this summer and look forward to hanging out with all of you in a new space.

### Our new location...sort of

Yes, we have moved to a new location. Actually it's not a new location at all, it's our old location. But we did move! It's a long story, but we are happy to be back in the Valley, central to the Spokane business district and yet close enough to our clients in Idaho. And speaking of clients, we are happy to see the sun shining (in between the rain and snow) as it means we're that much closer to seeing all of you! ☺

In care of trees, *Joe Zabely*

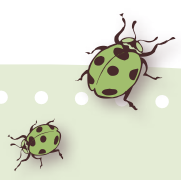
by Ben Kappen

## The Cool Crowd GrassRoots Garden Club

GrassRoots Garden Club is a group of gardeners and friends from the Spokane area who have been meeting for the last 10 years to share their mutual interest in all things horticultural.

Each month, the self-volunteered host chooses the location and topic for discussion. In February, we were delighted to join the group for a tree and shrub Q and A. We received a warm welcome and enjoyed a well-rounded discussion with a charming group of devoted gardeners that span a diverse range of interests in the gardens they maintain.

Interested in joining? The club is open for membership to all interested parties (men too!) and collectively donates to community causes closest to their hearts. Annual dues are \$10 and they meet the 2nd Monday of the month, March through December. For more information regarding GrassRoots Garden Club, email Mary Anne Brown, President, at [bobnma@comcast.net](mailto:bobnma@comcast.net).



**Seasonal To Do**

- Turn on, adjust and repair sprinklers
- Spring clean-up beds and lawn
- Assess and repair winter damage to plants
- Fertilize lawn and acid loving plants
- Arrange pruning for flowering trees and shrubs
- Apply pre-emergent weed control to lawn and beds

# The state of the canopy

by Joe Zubaly

A recent U.S. Forest Service study conducted by David Nowak and Eric Greenfield shows that trees are losing ground in many U.S. cities, but the good news is Spokane appears to be an exception (see photo at right).

Researchers used aerial photographs to analyze tree canopies in 20 different urban communities. Of those, 17 had statistically significant net reductions in tree canopies over the past decade. In Spokane though, the urban tree canopy remained stable. They determined that more than 21 percent of Spokane's landscape was covered by tree canopy in 2007.

Nowak states, "Whether they're Ponderosa pines native to Spokane or ornamental nursery trees, urban trees provide tremendous social and environmental benefits. Trees cool a city during the summertime, which has implications on energy use and human comfort. Trees remove pollution from the atmosphere; they have a cleansing effect on air quality. They provide wildlife habitat and they're important aesthetically. Urban trees are vital for water quality, because they capture the storm water runoff that carries pollutants to streams. Trees also soften the urban landscape, providing a calming effect for city residents."

Nowak encourages communities to retain large, old trees in addition to planting new ones. A mature tree with a diameter of 30 inches or



photo: spokaneurbanforestry.org

## Why not commit to planting a tree in your yard this year?

greater provides 60 to 70 times the leaf surface of a young tree with a 3-inch diameter, which means the older tree is also providing 60 to 70 times the environmental benefits than the young tree provides.

Angel Spell and the Urban Forestry department in Spokane should be commended for their efforts in keeping us "covered in trees." We are also glad to be a part of that effort and are proud to be partnered with the City of Spokane in preserving the Urban Forest. ↵

» [Learn more at spokaneurbanforestry.org](http://spokaneurbanforestry.org)

## Ask the Tree Care Experts

### How does a spring clean-up benefit my landscape?

by Becky Phillips

A good spring cleaning is beneficial for your property and has been proven to extend the life of the landscape and its features. This not only applies to the beds, but also to the lawn, hardscapes, water features, window wells, and gutters. There are many negative consequences associated with ignoring the buildup of debris that accumulates during the winter months including:

- Fungal diseases that overwinter on fallen leaves readily re-infect plants as new leaves emerge
- Debris mounds at the base of plants harbor mice and other rodents that may feed on the bark
- Sunlight and oxygen are unable to reach the crowns of emerging perennials, grass, and plants
- The growth of algae, moss and mold on turf, hardscapes and water features
- Leaves disrupt the free movement of water and can cause water to pool up and drains to clog, which leads to flooding



*Check it out!*

## New Service!

### Spring & Fall Clean-Up for shrub beds and lawn

*Call Becky today to schedule your service and prevent these issues from affecting the health and beauty of your property.*

### Hey Ben, what are your top three favorite flowering trees?

by Ben Larson

With so many wonderful flowering trees available it was difficult to pick a top three. However, after asking my fellow crew members their favorites and considering many characteristics, a few stood out from the rest.

**Flowering Dogwood** Dogwoods have very nice growth habit often becoming more wide than tall. Their flowers are not always very showy but are considered elegant due to their symmetry.

**Catalpa** I have a feeling this tree was chosen largely because they are fun to climb, but also because their flowers are very aromatic and their fruit is born in long pods that lend winter interest to their grand form.

**English Hawthorn** Though Hawthorns have some undesirable characteristics, everything negative is forgotten when they are covered from top to bottom in perfect pink and white flowers.

# Who's hot!

Our Plant Health Care Specialists: Randy Cenell, Alan Flake, Becky Phillips, Jeni Coopersmith,

One of our key promises is **knowledgeable experts**, and we are excited to have 2 new ISA Certified Arborists on the Plant Health Care Specialist team in 2012.

Returning to NPHC for their second season, Randy Cenell and Alan Flake passed the International Society of Arboriculture exam in the off season and are eager to care for your plants. Randy spent 7 years working for local golf courses before coming to NPHC and brings a wealth of turf knowledge to our team. Alan has 20+ years experience in various aspects of horticulture, which has provided him with a broad knowledge base and a well-rounded skill set.

Jeni Coopersmith returns for her 7th season with NPHC as the Crew Foreman. She has been an ISA Certified Arborist for 6 years and has a degree in Greenhouse/Nursery Management.

Becky is thrilled to lead this qualified group as our Divisional Manager. She respects the trust you place in NPHC and is always looking for the best way to manage the needs of your plants. This includes monitoring weather and the needs of individual plants to customize the visits our arborists make to your property.

Need specialized care for your plants? Feel free to contact Becky. She will be happy to answer questions and arrange for one of our arborists to help keep your properties healthy and beautiful. ☞



Randy Cenell and Alan Flake  
Becky Phillips and Jeni Coopersmith

*Combining Kate's favorite vegetable, Joe's favorite flavor and the boys' infatuation with couscous, this is a hit at the Zubaly home!*

## Lemony Asparagus & Shrimp Stirfry

1/2 cup finely chopped fresh italian parsley  
4 tsp grated lemon rind  
5 garlic cloves, finely chopped  
1/2 Tbsp grape seed oil

2 Tbsp grape seed oil, divided  
4 cups (1 1/2-inch) slices asparagus (about 1 lb.)  
1 medium sweet red pepper, sliced thin  
1 1/2 pounds medium shrimp, peeled and deveined  
Freshly ground black pepper & salt to taste  
Optional: 1/4 c white wine

Combine first 4 ingredients to make a paste & set aside. Use 1 Tbsp oil to stir fry asparagus and peppers in extra large sauté pan, about 3 minutes, stirring frequently. Remove veggies and keep warm. Use remaining oil to sauté shrimp, about 3 minutes or until done. Add veggies to shrimp and add lemon paste, mixing well. Salt and pepper to taste. If you want it saucier, add 1/4 cup white wine. We serve over couscous, but rice or fine noodles also work well! Serves 5 hearty appetites. ☞

## What's not! Quaking Aspen in the landscape

Quaking Aspens are awesome trees in their native environment. Their vigorous root system stabilizes hillsides, their need for abundant water aids in controlling flood waters, and they exude a quiet beauty as their leaves dance in the wind. However, as property owners strive to make them fit in the urban landscaped environment, those same attributes that make them great trees in the wild end up costing time and money.

The vigorous root system sends out multiple volunteers, and before long the little grove you planted takes over your property. People underestimate their water needs, causing them stress, thus enabling leaf spot, twig blight, spider mites, aphids, and poplar willow borer to set in. Then, instead of healthy green leaves dancing in the wind, you end up with blackish leaves, dying branch tips, sticky honeydew dripping down, and oozing borer holes riddling the trunks. Some things are best left in their natural state, and the Quaking Aspen is definitely one of them! ☞



I love working with NPHC! Their  
**talent, expertise, integrity  
and friendliness** are unparalleled in  
the industry. There is no better company!

~Olivette Orme, Spokane





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THE INSIDE DIRT

The state of the canopy

Our favorite flowering trees

GrassRoots Garden Club

# Low maintenance landscaping

by Ben Kappen

Most homeowners want to have a beautiful landscape to enjoy and one that will maintain or increase their property value. However, depending on the size and nature of the yard and garden areas, this can be a lot of work. The good news is a lovely landscape does not have to mean a second job. With some prioritization and careful planning, a low maintenance landscape can be highly functional and beautiful.

## Big picture

A low maintenance landscape starts with planning. Identifying and prioritizing wants and needs for landscape features will help determine how best to divide and use the space. As part of this planning process, predict yearly maintenance time and/or costs with features such as beds, lawn, water features, annual plantings, etc. Establishing a budget of time and dollars will help narrow your wish list to those items that are a priority and help you determine if you have the time, energy and funds to have all of the items on your wish list.

## Details

Once the general plan is in place, identify key ways to reduce maintenance time and costs. Utilize xeriscape plantings or drip irrigation and rock or bark mulch wherever possible to control weed growth. Select perennial flowers instead of annuals that have exceptional bloom length, that do not self seed or have sprawling root growth. Choose perennial plants and shrubs that are tolerant of pre-emergent herbicides and leave space in between plants to reduce the need for manual weeding. Utilize specific trees and shrubs where they have space to develop into their maximum size without extensive pruning or choose dwarf or miniature species that lend themselves to little or no pruning to avoid excessive maintenance. Instead of a waterfall or pond, install a fountain, birdbath or reflecting pool to add water to the garden. ↪



The experts at NPHC can help you design and maintain a lovely, easy care landscape.



Grasses offer year-round interest and are a perfect fit for our region.