



EVERGREEN LANDSCAPE ASSOCIATES

DESIGN • CONSTRUCTION • MAINTENANCE

GREEN THOUGHTS FOR GARDENING, LANDSCAPING, AND MAINTENANCE

AUGUST 2009

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Useful websites

FYI

99 Boulder Drive
Lake In The Hills, IL 60156
(847) 854-1195

521 W. Main Street
St. Charles, IL 60174
(630) 584-1989

Bloom Review-Late Summer

Chelone lyonii 'Hot Lips'
Common name: Pink
Turtlehead

Bloom time: Late summer
(August-September)

Flower color: Pink

Height: 36-48"

Chelone does best in partial
shade. This is an excellent
choice for troublesome,
occasionally wet sites, like
stream banks. It will need
room, as it can be 36" wide.

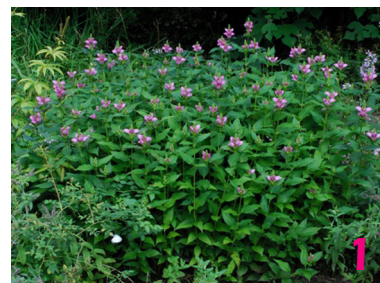
Solidago rugosa 'Fireworks'
Common name: Fireworks
Goldenrod

Bloom time: Late summer
(August-September)

Flower color: golden yellow

Height: 24-36"

This cultivated variety is
planted more often now
because they do not reseed
and take over. They are also
more compact and are less
susceptible to flop over.
Has an unusual bushy
flower habit.



1



2

Stachys monnieri
'Hummelo'

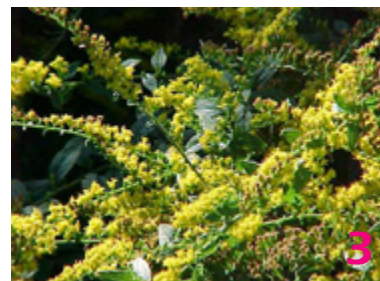
Common name: Alpine
Betony

Bloom time: Mid-late
summer (July-August)

Flower color: Deep pink-
lavendar

Height: 18-24"

This perennial has a very
upright habit. The flowers
are a top straight leafless
stems. All leaves are in a
clump at the base. This full
sun plant attracts butterflies.



3



4

Cimicifuga racemosa
'Brunette'

Common name: Black
Bugbane

Bloom time: Late summer
(August-September)

Flower color: blush pink

Leaves: Purple with cut
foliage

Height: 4-6'

The needs include shade to
partial shade. Flowers look
like bottle brushes. It will
do well as a backdrop for
other shade plants. The
straight species has green
leaves and white flowers.

What is mulch?

A protective covering spread over the soil surface to reduce evaporation of moisture, improve plant growth, discourage weedy species and enhance the appearance of the landscape is known as mulch.

Some benefits of using mulch are: provides insulation to soil, conserves evaporation of moisture, adds organic matter to soil, improves fertility, and gives a pleasing, manicured look.


* Contact our office for a free quote on installation of hardwood bark mulch.

1. *Chelone lyonii* 'Hot Lips'
2. *Cimicifuga racemosa* 'Brunette'
3. *Solidago rugosa* 'Fireworks'
4. *Stachys monnieri* 'Hummelo'

DESIGN 101: Choosing the best style for your home

Design a puzzle piece. That's easy. Design the puzzle and fit it just perfectly together takes time and a level of difficulty. The well designed landscape is like designing the puzzle, not each individual piece. One element at the beginning of every landscape design is the style of the landscape and how it will meet the specific needs of the client. Different themes can be used to compliment the architecture of the home, the amount of space, the shape of the property, or to create a specific feel. The rules are also learned in design, to know when and where to break them to make the space unique.

Curvilinear designs are by far the most common, but often misconstrued as the best. Curvilinear designs are curved shapes for hardscape, beds and lawn that are made up of partial or whole circles. A curvilinear design is thought to be more natural and flowing. This is not true because designs are still based in geometry and wouldn't be strong without fundamental principles.



The major concept of a curvilinear design is that the circles used to make the shapes, must be bold, sweeping and actual circles. Too many curves will look weak, too few and the design doesn't flow. Because of this, in smaller spaces or narrow spaces, a curvilinear design is not recommended because there may not be enough room to make bold enough curves.

Circular designs are very modern and geometric. They can be either made by overlapping circles or concentric circles. The overlapping circles are easy to understand, while a concentric circle design is achieved by using a common center point and creating spaces from partial or whole

concentric circles all radiating from that same center point. Both of these creates very unique spaces and allows for creating outdoor rooms in a patio. Done correctly, and the spaces will have a distinctive relationship to each other because they share a common center point or they are overlapped in a way that is pleasing. Done in the correct proportions creates balance. This option is not often used for the entire landscape, but maybe for the design of a patio or section of a larger property.

The square is not a boring shape, although it can sometimes be used in a boring way. Many new homes can come with a simple square or rectangular patio with no room for a table let alone the grill, or a place to walk on and off. Thus, the square has been given a bad name. Just like a curvilinear design, the entire yard from landscape beds to patios, walkways, and lawn spaces can be set in a rectangular design. Geometric shapes can be used in narrow spaces; the lines of squares can be used to draw the eye to a specific focal point. It works off the existing architecture of the house, as well. The straight line is a powerful tool in landscape design because elements along a common axis have a relationship, and can make a very strong statement.



Another way to change up the rectangle is to set the geometric pattern on an angle. The most common is 45 degrees because this doesn't create narrow cuts on hardscapes, difficult mowing areas, or spaces in beds that are too small to fit plants. This will increase the visual interest of the spaces and by using strong straight lines that make the landscape look bold. It is great to help eliminate views in neighborhoods where the view out the back door is another home, and can help frame views to more desirable parts of the yard and surrounding area. This is the most recommended design style for small narrow spaces because the lines can be made longer and thus make the property look bigger.

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“Geometric shapes can be used in narrow spaces; or the lines of squares can be used to draw the eye to a specific focal point”

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Another interesting style not often used is called Arc and Tangent. The idea is to use curves and 90 degree angles in pleasing patterns. This is often done incorrectly. Many times this theme is taken to mean rounding out the corners on a rectangular design. This is done most often because it is thought to look more natural, without taking up too much space. In contrast, it doesn't appear natural like sweeping curves of a curvilinear design, and thus is weak. Also, a good design using any theme will not waste space. If the space is being wasted, the design is either not done well or isn't fitting the needs of the client or site.

The theme most difficult to achieve is the angular design. It is achieved by making spaces out of different angles instead of using only one. Often this can look chaotic because it is more difficult to establish a relationship between the property, the home, and the design. The angles are made up of 45, 60, and 90 degrees. Narrow angles are not suggested, as they create maintenance problems. Many times this idea will look best in an area of rugged landscape, such as a mountain side or desert. It is used very little in the Midwest.



Most times a combination theme is established. The front and backyards do not have to be in the same theme, and plant beds do not have to be the same theme as the hardscapes. Also, larger properties may use elements of several themes because different rooms within the property serve different purposes. It is important to know the size and scale of the project to know whether combinations will be complimentary to the site or add chaos. You must first learn and master the rules before you know how and when it is appropriate to break them.

The puzzle is solved. Establishing a well thought out landscape can be challenging, but when all the elements come together it is a truly winning combination. Don't underestimate the needs for using themes to create balance and relationships between otherwise random aspects of the property. These are the tools that designers use to carve into the potential of a site and make each piece into a completed work.

Ever wonder why so many landscapes are circular or curvy? It is because the human eye is naturally drawn to circular forms. Most human beings can find the center of a circle visually without having to measure



THE ICING ON THE CAKE: How landscape accessories can put the finishing touches on the design

Crossing the "T's" and dotting the "I's" of the landscape through well placed focal features is often misconstrued. Often, it is an after-thought, doesn't add value, and is inappropriate in its intent. Done well, and a focal feature can tie landscape elements together and draw the viewer to key points in the landscape.

The main objective in adding well placed accessories is to give the viewer of the landscape a place to rest their eye before taking in the whole landscape. Sound too intellectual and artistic? The idea is simple. With too many beautiful areas to look at, nothing will stand out, while everything will stand out. It is confusing to the human eye. Certain things in a landscape will stand out more. Hardscape elements like patios, structures like the neighbor's house, or a shed will stand out heavier than plant material. There is no way to stop the eye from not focusing on these elements. That's why adding hardscape focal features and softening views are so important. It actually puts the focus back into the beautiful landscape you've spend your time and money creating. Also, plants that have a lot of movement like ornamental grasses are more eye-catching. Adding a lot of grass to a back border will take the focus, and adding a few well placed grasses among more structured plants add contrast and will attract attention. Landscape designers use these main principles to tell their clients story. What do you want people to see in your landscape? Focal features are the tour guides that point to the important parts of the design.

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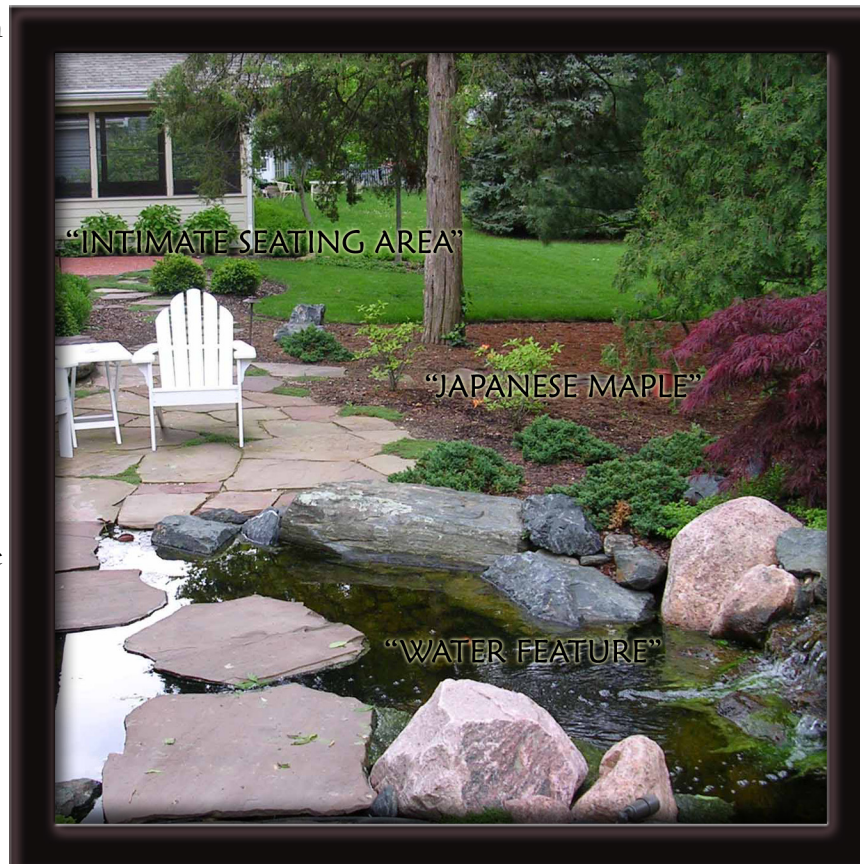
A beautiful landscape can use a picture frame of equal value. This can be done with a well placed arbor. An arbor is used at the beginning of a walkway or at the doorway of a garden. It seems to state, "enter here". Looking through an arbor can give a snapshot of plant material, or even another focal feature. An arbor can even frame a borrowed view. This could be a beautiful grove of trees on the golf course, or forest preserve, or the perennial garden in your neighbor's yard. It can showcase a destination like a quaint intimate seating area, or patio. It can be the foreground for well placed screening. It will draw the eye to focus on a heavily planted area behind it instead of unsightly elements like the abundance of parked cars at the park across the street.

Ever wonder why so many landscapes are circular or curvy? It is because the human eye is naturally drawn to circular forms. Most human beings can find the center of a circle visually without having to measure. That is why all curved beds look more appealing when they are made up of whole or partial radii of circles instead of awkward and weak curves. It also lends itself well to placing focal points. The eye will often expect to see a focal point at the center of a circle, even if the circle is only part of a circle. In a more formal landscape this could be a fountain or an English styled garden with boxwoods, roses, and gravel paths. Adding a focal feature along one of

the axis' of the center of the circle, will accomplish the same task. Because your eye is drawn to this area, this can be some of the best locations for plant focal features like Japanese Maples, or a plant of interesting habit like a Pagoda Dogwood. In large landscapes with large sweeping curved beds, it is most important to keep these elements large, like an ornamental tree of different habit or color. The further away the viewer will be seeing these elements the grander the

them grow, they begin to be hidden and dwarfed against the rest of the garden. It is imperative to see the future. A landscape designer can help visualize the garden as it will be in three to five years down the line and plan accordingly. Also, smaller elements have a style all of their own. A whimsical statue of a garden fairy says a completely different statement than a geometric abstract sculpture. These elements should complement each other. Just as you wouldn't combine completely different styles of architecture on the outside a home, also combinations of garden accessories don't create a pulled together design.

These smaller elements should be placed not only to attract attention to all the right places, but also to be enjoyed by the viewer in all the right places. Just as certain plants create movement, which is visually exciting, also to is the idea of water. Water features are one of the most often misplaced features. They are best enjoyed near an area that can be seen and heard from key windows in the home.



statement and the larger more established plants give the landscape that "not so new" look.

The most common ill-placed focal features are the smallest. These are the bird feeders, statues, small garden fountains, boulders and planters. This is often because when a landscape is new, these features are in scale, but as the plants around

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It is a challenge because with larger features, they can overpower, run the risk of looking unnatural or because of their natural form, fall short of pulling together a more modern design. Done correctly, it can set the stage for relaxation and become of theme of the backyard retreat. Smaller water features like converted planters may work better for more modern homes or with landscape designs of a modern nature, as well as smaller properties. The style of the feature is versatile and can take the shape and form of boulders, Italian styled stone fountains, rusted relics, Victorian gazing balls, and weeping walls. The possibilities allow for not only tying together the landscape design, but also allows for a unique element crafted for the individual.

After creating the perfect setting, the furniture style is an accessory into which thought is well worth placing. A natural landscape may look better with natural wood furniture. Creating a formal space might lend itself to iron. The most important thing to keep in mind is the scale of the furniture. A patio space, well designed, is all about circulation. It is less about the design, then where people will stand, sit, and walk. That challenge of the landscape designer is to create spaces that lead people around the patio and garden a certain way, be balanced, and visually pleasing. If the client is meant to enjoy a focal feature, the patio should encourage this. One general rule is that a bare minimum space for a 6 ft circular table is 12 ft x 12 ft. The feel will change based on how much or how little space is in excess around it. Too much furniture is a common accessory flaw. Since the spaces are designed to hold a desired amount of people, furniture basics should be thought of before the design is complete. If the space is cluttered with furniture, the

“The focal points of a landscape are there to embellish, direct, and add personality”

circulation is disrupted and the design doesn't work. Adding that “just one more” element of furniture can tip the scale to excessive and the clutter creates visual discourse even if the piece is beautiful.

Mapping a beautiful landscape on paper is all about creating the vision and satisfying the client's needs and desires. The focal points of a landscape are there to embellish, direct, and add personality. The above discussion is not at all about artistic do's and don'ts. It is not about following hard and fast rules. Just as these elements can enhance, so to can focal features hinder and a little planning separates a finger painting from a masterpiece.

CONSIDER TREE AND SHRUB DEEP ROOT FERTILIZATION

Deep root fertilization restores vital nutrients to the soil, it will lead to better overall health for the plants, which improves appearance, growth, and flowers.

SCALING BACK: Economic projects for the landscape

Call it penny pinching, coupon clipping, or spending downsizing. Some of us have already felt the ill effects of a down economy while others have felt that they should be worried with all the media attention it has been receiving. Whatever the reason, spending less has become the norm. If you are like me, you are very tired of letting these negative thoughts in, tired of worrying about tomorrow and are ready to explore the options for moving forward with caution.



A great landscape architect recently told me that money doesn't determine the landscape project, but rather the phasing of that landscape project. If you have a lot of ideas, it is better to get them out in the open with your landscape designer right away. Don't be afraid to give a shopping list for your dream landscape because there are many ways to split projects up into manageable chunks, while not having to scale back on the ideas. Also, we can help give you reasonable budgets to work with and help you decide what your main desires are. Maybe you don't need everything you thought you did once you have explored all your options. I have assembled a list of my own to help stimulate your creative side in the world of 2009.

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Reduce, reuse, and recycle.

Capture rainwater to use on new landscapes, during drought and for annual plantings. It is not only good for the environment, but also helps cut down the water bill cost. Another age old idea is composting. The rich nutrients in the compost will be a great addition to plant beds without having to purchase compost. Reusing quality materials like blue-stone, or clay pavers, or even finding an antiqued piece to use as a trellis or sculpture can give an old world look while allowing you to keep material costs down. Even if there isn't enough material to do an entire patio, there might be enough pavers to inlay a pattern within another type of paver, or make a soldier course, or even edge a driveway. If these recycled materials are in good shape and can be worked into the color scheme it can be a money saver.

Use annuals sparingly. Annuals are the best way to dress up your landscape with a splash of color all season long. They need more water, and need replacing yearly. Restrict them to planters or small areas to cut down on water and on the cost. Perennials are more expensive, but will come back every year. Also, when it comes to perennials, some with double in size the second year. If you want a show stopping landscape, I advocate to plant bigger shrubs and trees because they take longer to grow, and plant only one-gallon perennials. You won't get the instant wow factor, but if they are healthy, growth will be rewarding in year two or three.

Cut down on vertical hardscapes. If you look in a garden center advertisement

or paver brochure it can look like every home needs seat walls, columns, and plant beds bordered by pavers. This is where a good landscape designer can come in handy. Green space is more visually valuable than hardscape. Massive driveways, patios that come directly up to the foundation of a house, seatwalls that exceed 1.5' tall. It is a harsh reality for your yard and for your budget. Evergreen Landscape is all about proportionally designing the hardscapes to be the correct size for your home, and family. There is no need to go crazy with seatwalls and columns. Have your landscape designer use them sparingly, and invest in less expensive plants. It will create a softer look while separating spaces, and screening views.



Seed more and sod less. During the fall and spring, seeding a lawn is a better investment. It requires daily watering, just like sod and should germinate in just 10 days or so. It isn't an instant lawn, but will require less maintenance in the long run. Many sodded lawns struggle over the long term, while requiring a lot of work to establish and costing more. Also, if your lawn was originally seeded and is in need of repair, replacing with sod can make the lawn look like a patchwork quilt and may take a long time to match the rest of the lawn.

FYI How landscaping increases property values

Smart Money Magazine published a report in March 2003 issue entitled: "Add 15 percent to Your Home's Value". The magazine told its readers, one of your greatest assets may be your backyard, literally".

Eight additional "Values of Landscaping":

1. Lower noise levels
2. Blocks unpleasant views
3. Reduces crime
4. Lowers heating and cooling
5. Improves home appearance
6. Optimizes the use of land and outdoor spaces
7. Reduces usage of chemicals on the property
8. Allows for the imaginative use of styles, features, plants, and ornaments

Helpful websites:

1. www.evergreenlandscape.net
2. <http://urbanext.illinois.edu/hort//>
3. www.rainbarrelsource.com