

Fall 2010

# The Designer

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## 2010 International Landscape Design Award Winners

Interview with our Landscape Designer  
of the Year: James Doyle Associates

Student Spotlight: Jing Zhang

Allied Member Listings



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# The Designer

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### Cover and Contents Page Photos:

2010 International Landscape Designer of the Year James Doyle Design Associates, Greenwich, CT – Harmony Farm Project



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## Letter from the Editor

Dear Members,

As usual, our fall issue is dedicated to our annual International Landscape Design Award Winners. This year, because of an abundance of excellent entries, the entire issue is devoted to our winners. We're running photos of the gardens, as well as an image of each "plan," descriptions of each garden and a comment or two from the panel of judges. I thank Jeanne Weber, president of our Pennsylvania-Delaware chapter, for assistance in editing this issue. Finally, we've lost a member or two on our Communications Committee, so if any of you out there with editing, writing and/or public relations experience would like to join us, please let us know. In the meantime, please keep the contributions to the magazine coming.

Jane Berger, APLD  
APLD Communications Chair

# Letter from the President

Fall is in the air as I write this at the end of August for the Fall Designer. I can smell the crisp air, feel the changing angle of the sun and see the hint of gold, red and brown in the soon to be turning leaves. It is harvest time: the apples are ripening, the lavender ready to snip, and the smell of garlic is wafting up from Gilroy, CA when the wind turns northward.

It's also time to look at some of the major accomplishments we have achieved this year in the name of APLD. I'm assuming you have had a chance to read my letter in the September issue of Design Online; this is meant to highlight a few of the many projects.

A major boost in our public exposure has come as a result of our investment in hiring a public relations firm, Garden Media Group (GMG). For the last two years, our landscape design award winners have been featured in major publications, the designer's local media outlets and trade publications. Margie Grace's 2009 award winning design was chosen for the cover of Lawn & Garden Retailer.

GMG estimates that we have received media exposure worth over \$1,222,138 if we were to buy advertising in the same newspapers, magazines, radio, television and websites that have featured APLD. They invite each of us to share our good news, high resolution pictures (before and after) of gardens we have created, and story ideas with GMG. We are invited to contact Kathleen Hassinger at ([Kathleen@gardenmediagroup.com](mailto:Kathleen@gardenmediagroup.com))

Another area that benefits us all is the work of Laura Kuhn, our legislative chair. Many members - and some non-members - write Laura with specific questions regarding their right to practice as landscape designers. Some of the questions she receives are straightforward, and for these she provides links, basic information, a bit of perspective and support. Her committee is studying the costs and benefits of a subscription to a legislative tracking service. Her knowledge and responsiveness to chapters who have experienced threats to their right to practice has been very much appreciated this year. It is quite possibly the most important service APLD can offer its members—the vigilance in protecting our right to practice.

Our new website, which you will have all had a chance to experience by the time this magazine is published, is another significant milestone for APLD. Susan Cohan, APLD, and her technical committee have spent countless hours with a web designer to develop a whole new look and function. The new website is consumer friendly, easy to use and most importantly has the ability to highlight each designer. Every member through the "Find a Designer" function will have their own landing page. The Find a Designer function is user driven via "miles" from zip code and a map will pop up that will have arrows to each listing. Members will be in charge of what is on their landing page within

the parameters spelled out by the technical committee. This page in essence is our own "face" within APLD and the Find a Designer function which is always visible no matter what other page a person is visiting within the site.

This addresses a few things: almost 40 percent of APLD members don't have a website - now we will have a web presence without having to have one; the individual member page gives each of us an opportunity to in fact "sell" ourselves via a photographic "avatar" and quotes as well as delineating our expertise within our area of practice; the consumer friendly part of the website has been beefed up and will yield more referrals through the website so it's a win-win.

Lastly, I want to encourage all of you to become part of the leadership of APLD, at the district, chapter or international level. We need you, your energy, your ideas, your creativity. Tom Wilhelm, APLD, president of MA's APLD chapter wrote recently, "I feel board participation is incredibly educational. From my meeting with state legislators on practice law, to attending allied green industry association meetings, where my board and I continue to raise the profile of APLD within the industry, it's incredibly enriching and enlightening. I think we give 'education' a very narrow definition when a talk on sculpture in the garden, or low voltage lighting effects gets greater priority than operating in the wide breadth of information that comes with board membership."

I couldn't have said it better! Go for it! It will enrich your life and the life of APLD. And in the end, you will feel as I do now: that it has been a great privilege to serve APLD and our profession.



Patricia St. John, APLD  
APLD President



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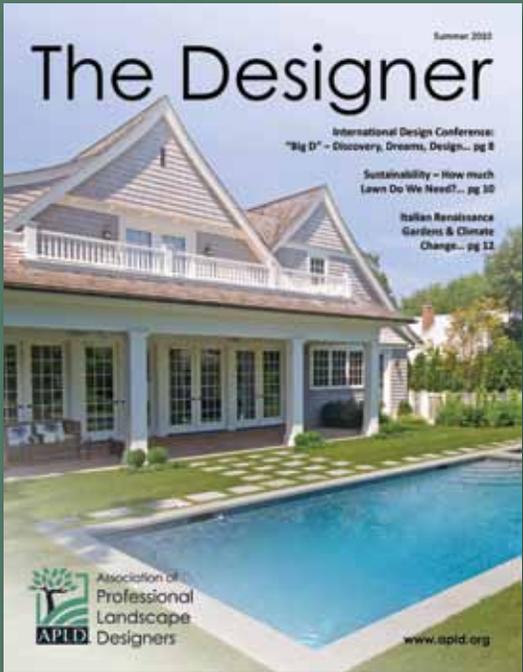
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## *The Designer* Call for Submissions

APLD's Communications Committee is always looking for submissions to *The Designer* and article ideas to keep the content of our publication relevant to the landscape design industry.

The next deadline for article submission is November 1, 2010 for the Winter issue. Feature articles can range anywhere between 500 to 1500 words and can be about a unique project, an interesting problem or a design inspiration and philosophy—really, it can be anything you think your fellow designers would want to read about. Have you written an article for another magazine? Feel free to tweak that article a little and submit a slightly different version for *The Designer*.

If you have an article that you would like to submit for inclusion in *The Designer*, send an e-mail to [communications@apld.org](mailto:communications@apld.org) or feel free to call the office at 717.238.9780 to speak with our communications staff. Help us make your magazine even better by being a contributing writer yourself!



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international landscape  
design awards

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the winners

# Planting Design Merit Award

## Coastal Maine Landscape South Brooksville, Maine

Burdick & Associates, Ellsworth, Maine

The property includes a seasonal residence on the coast of Maine, located on rocky terrain that was formerly a granite quarry. Native plants on much of the property soften the exposed granite. Our project areas included a shaded zone at the base of a ledge outcropping, reached from the driveway via a 75 foot elevated wooden walkway that protected moss, lichens, and blueberries below; ledge outcroppings in full sun where the soil was thin and poor; and leach fields in full sun and along the edges of a stream that feeds a quarry pool.

The clients wanted a planting design that would blend seamlessly into the rocky environs and the native flora already on the site. Our top priority was to maintain the site's natural appearance and preserve cherished views over the rocky terrain that is home to determined lichens, mosses, and ferns. We first had to determine which elements of the landscape established its identity, and to use those elements as the essential vocabulary of the design.

We used native Maine plants to screen the clients' living and activity areas from views of the driveway, to establish protected areas and create mystery in the landscape. Plantings massed around the structures and hardscape soften the hard edges of the quarried rock and blend into the surrounding landscape. Native vegetation cushions and conceals the exposed ledge and hardscape around a newly constructed custom granite spa and tennis court, blurring the boundaries between built and natural landscapes. Leach fields and disturbed areas are planted with large masses of native groundcovers.

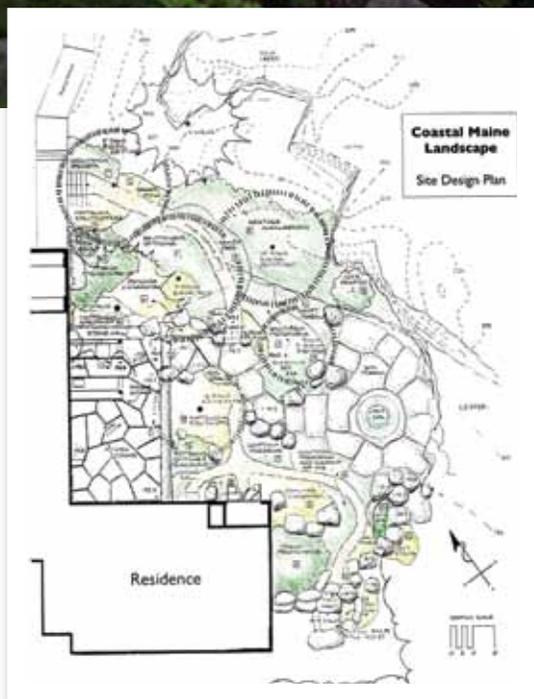
The design was intended to accurately mimic the wild, hard-scrabble landscape. The planting design had to disguise the existence of a new spa and maintain the original semblance of the landscape in other areas as well. Native groundcover plantings blended the natural features with the manmade. Desired views through the landscape were maintained by limiting the use of middle story plants.

This project used native plants to a rewarding end—a once-damaged, now-healed site was worked to create a finished design that is at home in its context. Planting was done carefully, re-using much plant material removed from the site prior to construction. Additional planting conformed to the species already on site.

A coherent and graceful connection of a design to its context is a sine qua non of most projects. This project took the relationship between design and context and pushed it to its limit: a design so well integrated that the project seems an innate part of the landscape. While the site's history as a former quarry meant the land had seen significant alteration, nature's healing hand has begun to soften the scars. The planting design continued that healing.



Photo by: Burdick and Associates



*Judges' Comments: Very sympathetic treatment and in keeping with the mature settings...love the repeat planting and mass ground cover... a very good scheme with restraint and planting on bulk working well...use of pine needles as a mulch works well... use of cobbles and rocks very powerful.*

# Non-Residential Merit Award

## Rubenow Square - Greifswald, Germany

Axel Lohrer - lohrer.hochrein landscape architects, Munich, Germany

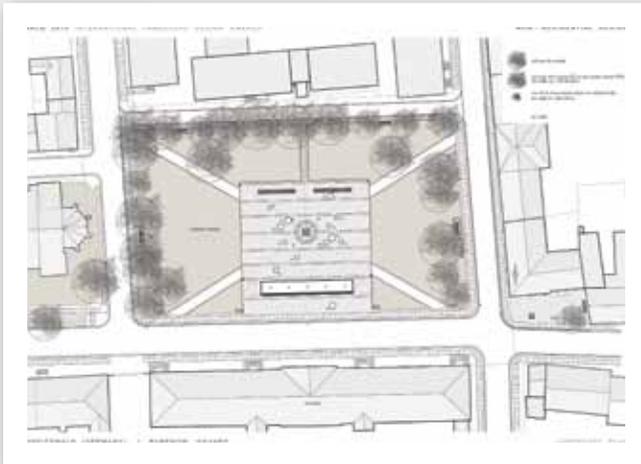
The city of Greifswald, near the Baltic sea is known for its old university and its medieval town centre. The Rubenow square is composed of the squares surrounding the town hall and churches, and are valuable open spaces in the old town. We were hired to redesign the square in front of the University of Greifswald to celebrate the university's 550th anniversary. Rubenow square, an area of nearly 4.200 m<sup>2</sup>, was originally designed by gardening director Peter Joseph Lenné (1789-1866). It was redesigned in 1956.

The clients asked us to maintain the historical green space in the town, but redesign it in a modern style as a site for students, residents and tourists. Our design is based on a plan by Lenné and uses the historical cross of ways. The center forms the monument of Heinrich Rubenow, the founder of university. A water basin near the ground accentuates the passage from street area to square. The glitter of the sunlight on the water expands the space of the square. We cleared shrubs to open the views and visitors now have a view from

the square to university and the surrounding city. Valuable old lime trees were preserved, and we added additional *Tilia cordata* 'Rancho'. Globes of boxwood (*Buxus sempervirens sempervirens*) are freely placed in the centre of square.

Now, there are places for people to sit in the sun or in the shadow of trees. The paving around the monument and the passageways to the university are constructed of light granite and slap bands of dark-gray basalt with writing. At night there is illumination on the university buildings, on the monument of Heinrich Rubenow and lights are also installed at ground level to provide security at night.

Rubenow square is now both a representative courtyard in front of the university building, a green meeting-place, and a place of rest for students and university staff members, tourists and nearby residents. In all, it's a valuable green open space in the historic town of Greifswald.



*Judges' comments:* A good scheme, clean and bold... the design shows restraint and meets its brief. It's a great space to hang out and for social interaction, and good use of hard materials.

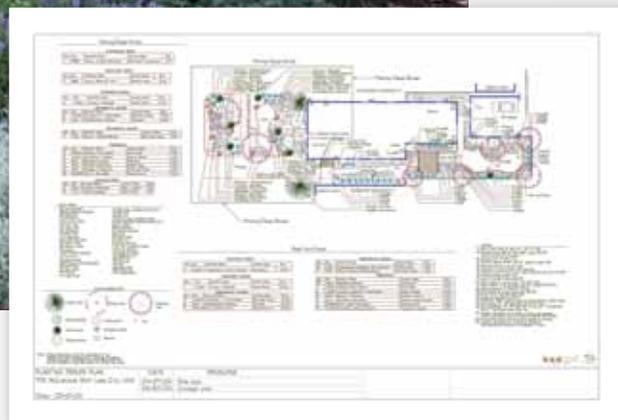


Photo by: Hans-wulf Kunze



Photo by: Rick Laughlin

**Judges' Comments:** Good solution to client's needs. Attractive mix of color and texture... Easy to care for...Relates well to home and neighborhood



# Planting Design Merit Award

## Colorful Waterwise Garden - Salt Lake City, Utah

Rick Laughlin, APLD - Laughlin Design Associates, Salt Lake City, Utah

The client often travelled and had no time for a high-maintenance garden. He sought curb appeal in preparation for putting his house on the market. Our goal was to soften the imposing house with a layered, diverse and colorful planting offering four seasons of interest. We sought to make a water-wise, wildlife-attracting oasis in the city using layers of eye-catching plants to increase the perception of space in the small front yard, focusing attention on the landscape within.

The site presented with a large concrete foundation that separates the house from the lot. An extensive, thirsty lawn does nothing to soften this effect. This typical mono-culture American yard had little landscape interest and so your eye was drawn to the house and driveway since there is little landscape interest here!

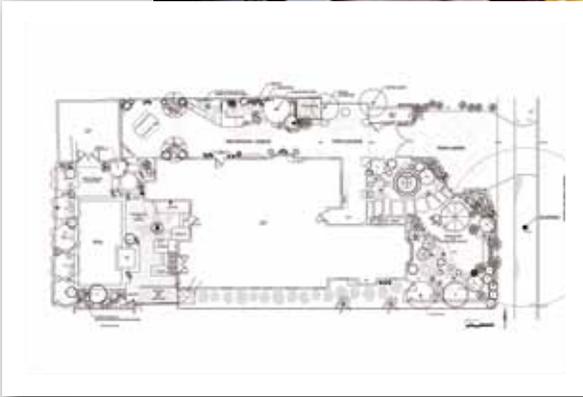
The front turf and parking strip turf were eliminated except for one functional area, and replaced with a plant palette adapted to the arid, zone 5 climate and sunny (six to seven hours a day) site. The planting completely covers the ground plane, plant-to-plant, in varied layers and textures, again adding depth. The park strip and main yard area were unified by repeating the same masses of evergreen shrubs, ornamental grasses, perennials and groundcover. The low

mass of *cerastium* in the park strip foreground and the thyme in main yard foreground acts as a foil for the layered plantings behind them. Two *Acer grandidentata*s are in scale with the house and connect the house to its surroundings and contributing fall color. More seasonal interest was achieved with evergreen *Picea*, *Cytisus*, *Artemisia*. The use of a variety of colorful, water-wise plants creates landscape interest while reducing the owner's water use and maintenance time. An increase in hummingbird and butterfly sightings was observed.

This picturesque garden uses all water-wise plants that require drip irrigation only once a week. Extensive plantings help absorb storm water, greatly reduce the weeding, and eliminate runoff into the street. The addition of soil amendment tilled into the heavy clay allowed water-wise plants to grow quickly while establishing deep, healthy root systems, producing a garden with minimal maintenance needs, just seasonal dead heading and sporadic weeding. The small lawn space features a drought-tolerant turf-type tall fescue that only requires one-third the water of conventional bluegrass.

Enhanced curb appeal helped the house sell without even listing it on the market!

Photo by: Jeff Dumas



*Judges' Comments: Clear design intent, very creative, memorable impact... Client needs creatively met for outdoor living. This is a very creative high-impact design in every way... Terrific solution to hiding pool equipment.*

# Residential Merit Award

## Casa de los Arcos - Los Angeles, California

Laura Morton, APLD - Laura Morton Design, West Hollywood, California

Casa de los Arcos is a 1934 Spanish Revival home, with great architectural details, and when we first encountered it, the front yard was overgrown, the soil was compacted, and equipment for the new pool was located smack in the middle of driveway, due to setbacks.

The clients, work-at-home writers, opted for a complete re-design of the entire property with areas for relaxing, entertaining, cooking, dining, storage and appreciation of the outdoors. They were particularly fond of California Mission Gardens, Early California Style, and Moorish-Andalusia influences. They wanted to extend views and living spaces outdoors to comfortable courtyards that feel secure but open; to have a new entry with curb appeal; to make the pool equipment disappear; and to anchor the house to its past. .

In the front, we created a large entry courtyard. A low wall topped with a ribbon of ironwork holds thorny damask roses and bougainvillea.. A generously sized walkway leads to the front door past a gurgling octagonal tiled fountain evoking the first Spanish missions. Benches invite you to enjoy the seasonally changing habitat of a mixed California native meadow and Mission period plantings.

In the back yard, a new privacy hedge along pool hides a nearby apartment building. Walls were painted a rich goldenrod, picking up the pool tile and adding drama for the deep greens. Richly upholstered banquettes cushion the hardscape repeating the soft colors in the Moroccan tiled patios. A full-grown date palm was sited as an "umbrella" over the sitting areas, cooling the southwest-facing walls. A shimmering glass fire pit and shower add to the atmosphere, and patterned light from exotic lanterns make this landscape a magical indoor-outdoor experience. Plantings are evergreen to minimize litter.

On the side of house, we installed a hard-surface drive to comply with code. Copying an existing patio pattern, we manipulated the concrete throughout using decorative pebbles, coloring, and staining. An outdoor kitchen and bar was carefully designed around the pool equipment with doors that open wide for maintenance. A purple bougainvillea espaliered upon the metallic deep blue aged wood fence is dramatic. The new garage doors are paneled with sheet metal and wood quatrefoils, creating a backdrop for candlelight in the outdoor dining room. The table placed on a diagonal captures views through to pool area. The decision to re-plaster the house white with a rich brown trim completed this spirited urban California oasis.

# Residential Merit Award

## Courtyard Living, San Miguel Style - Corpus Christi, Texas

Kathy Snyder Hubner, APLD - Gill Landscape Nursery, Corpus Christi, Texas

The property includes a Spanish style house of stone and tile with a roof of clay tiles. A new pool was installed by an architect on the original site, but the client later sold off the back half of the lot, so the pool was then located along the back fence, out of view and far from the kitchen patio. The site was overgrown, and there were several drainage problems, along with unattractive and poorly planned garden elements.

The clients wanted a low maintenance garden with no lawn, sitting and lounging spaces around the pool, and a dining area for entertaining. They also wanted dog-friendly plants; rocks and specimen cacti; and an attractive entrance to the guest house. As the client put it, he wanted to “feel like he’s in San Miguel” when in his back yard.

Our design included plans to convert the back yard into a multi-use courtyard suitable for entertaining or relaxing. Colors throughout the courtyard matched the color of the pool tile, and walls were painted cobalt blue making them recede and cool the space. The client’s religious art collection inside was reflected in tile mural at the end of the pool, and we integrated the pool into the yard by adding a dining pavilion and making it a destination. We created a shady backdrop of palms, yuccas, and tropicals punctuated with

pots of cactus and perennials that tolerate shade. We also created a landscape resilient to and usable by the client’s five dogs. Since there is no lawn, decomposed granite allows the client to quickly and easily clean up after his pets.

We graded the area around the guest house so that water drains to the back gate via a dry creek. A casual walking surface in decomposed granite moves water and allows it to percolate into the soil. Expanded shale was used under trees to modify the grade without smothering the roots. We planted directly in shale to correct the grade and improve drainage for succulents. Specimen cactus were planted in pots and located in sunny areas. We used pavers for the main patio to move water to recessed drains so that it can be piped to front yard – beyond the house. Boulders and flagstone were placed as natural stepping stones through the plantings make convenient paths for the dogs.

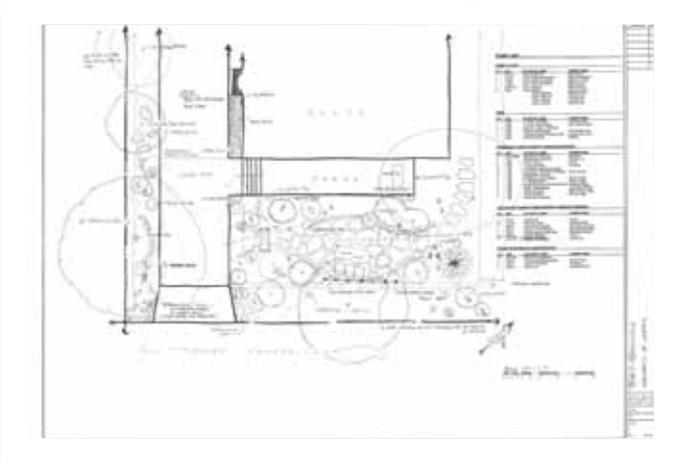
Plants used were collected on site, at the client’s ranch, and salvaged from land he sold. The landscape has no irrigation and relies on rainfall. Shale and decomposed granite allow water to percolate into the soil. The client’s existing brick was reused in the new landscape, which is low maintenance and requires no mowing.

*Judges’ Comments: A bold design with bright colors that breathe life and vigor into the garden, especially when compared to the previous site conditions (a dramatic transformation!). Better response to pet- and entertainment-friendly planting requirements than I would otherwise have expected.*



Photo by: Reba Graham

Photo by: Lepere Photo



*Judges' Comments: A strong overall impact... In such a small front yard, it's not inappropriate to cram it full of many details - this garden makes sense as a "candy box"... excellent (example of) repurposed materials... reinforcing the theme and expressing the owner's values.*

# Residential Merit Award

## Paseo Tranquillo - Santa Barbara, California

Grace Design Associates, Santa Barbara, California

The owner's 1948 urban bungalow rests on a slightly sloping urban plot with clay soil and a zone 9 Mediterranean climate. We had a mandate to remove the lawn dominating the front yard, inherited from the previous owner, and replace it with a productive and sustainably built, low-maintenance and water-smart garden. It had to be flexible in its roles as an outdoor living space attractive to wildlife, and gorgeous. We sought to create a "blended garden" in which fruit, vegetables and ornamentals cohabitate successfully and beautifully. The plants would be well-adapted to the site conditions and blend harmoniously with the architecture, site, neighborhood and environment.

When the lawn was removed the site was subtly terraced and graded level for furniture and for keeping storm water on-site. Existing mature plantings of Jacaranda, tulip tree, property-lining hedges and a Cecile Brunner rose were incorporated to give the garden maturity and complexity, to define the space and create green walls and welcome shade. Old hand-hewn curbstones, local field stone and a sandstone wall cap were salvaged from an abandoned orchard and incorporated into the garden's dry rock walls. The terracing formed raised beds, improving drainage in the heavy soil.

Low-water-demand, root-rot-resistant perennials fill these beds, providing cut flowers and low fuss maintenance. Fruit trees were incorporated into the beds and adjacent to the drive and strategically placed where screening or height was needed. Large flagstones set over sand created a permeable patio situated to take advantage of existing shade from the street tree. An open screen and entry arch add privacy, definition without forming a barrier and support peas, beans, cukes and other climbers in season. Large pots are used for raised vegetable gardening, and deliver structure, interest and color while providing a stoop-free way to work. Gravel was added to the rough asphalt drive to dress it up and it now reads as part of the garden and serves as additional gathering space as needed. Scavenged materials were patched up and colored. Most of the pots were from the "chips and dings" corner and a large concrete bowl used for the fountain was originally cracked and unattractive.

The owner participates in the local "Food Not Lawns" neighborhood garden exchange group. Neighbors stop in to chat, and surplus produce changes hands. What began as a "get rid of the lawn" campaign has become community-making, living simply and well, and leaving a light footprint.

# Residential Merit Award

## Schuler Estate Gardens - Mendham Township, New Jersey

J. Scott Mortensen, APLD - Cedarwood Landscaping, Inc., Mendham, New Jersey

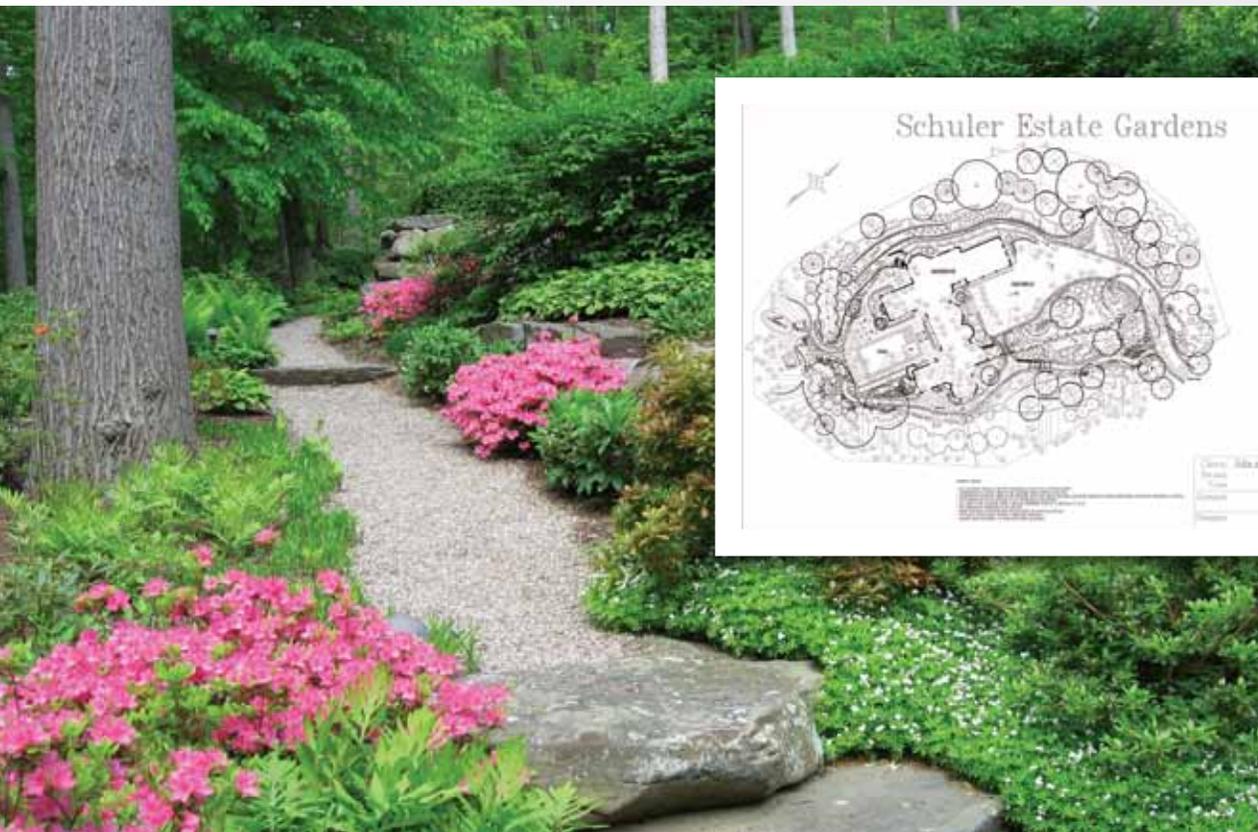
This newly constructed house was nestled within an undeveloped area on the side of a rolling hill covered by woodland forest. This secluded site was a combination of cool shaded areas and sunny dry locations. Our goal was to bring this newly constructed residence into balance with its spectacular surroundings. The client requested self-sustaining, low maintenance plant material which was to include no turf areas in any location. They also expressed concerns about increased privacy to help create a more peaceful oasis centered around the entrance to the home and the pool area.

It was our design intent to meet the client's expectations by creating a relatively self-supporting landscape to compliment the sophisticated feel of the home without detracting from its grand architectural elements. Additionally, we expanded the living space by providing outdoor areas interconnected by a series of meandering pathways. Great consideration was given to low impact plant material which would provide multi-season interest and address items such as erosion control and a wide variety of nectar sources for beneficial garden insects.

The overall scope of this project allowed us to utilize a wide palette of complimentary colors and textures. Low maintenance materials were combined, creating an outstanding marriage of form and function throughout all seasons and the ever-changing flow of progressive blossoms resulted in a stunning natural landscape which adds beauty and value to the property. Some specific features within this project include highlighting the stone turret located to the left of the front door, careful delineation of the main entrance door versus the secondary entrance door, complimenting the large windows overlooking the pool, thoughtful layout of the interconnecting pathways, and the creation of a restful hammock area.

Environmentally, the vast majority of selected plant material is self-sustaining, including the utilization of a large number of naturalizing perennials. The dry laid paths and the bluestone patios allow water to permeate back into the local soil. Retaining walls and stairs were constructed from native boulders, some of which existed on the property. Plant material was selected for its ability to readily adapt to the existing site conditions and to aid in establishment, and drip irrigation was installed where appropriate. A highly efficient low voltage outdoor lighting system was implemented to provide a sense of security and expanded living space.

*Judges' Comments: The overall design does fit the site context and allows the house to settle into the setting. Much of the planting is relaxed and effective, alternating between masses and specimens. Good low maintenance/input plant selection.*



# Residential Merit Award

## Modern Woodland Front Entrance - East Hampton, New York

Barry Block - Barry Block Landscape Design and Contracting, Inc.,  
East Moriches, New York

When the project began, the client had nearly completed renovations on this modern home located in a semi-wooded zone 6 area. The client sought functional improvements to the front entrance approach, the parking and the circulation, with great curb appeal. It was necessary to connect the bold overall sensibility of the home to its natural woodland surroundings.

The property is buffered from the front roadway by scrub oaks and pitch pines. We eliminated the broken gravel circular driveway and re-vegetated the barren landscape with plant species native to zone 6. The same plant species were repeated throughout the front woodland understory to blend the entire front together giving more privacy while maintaining a natural native feel.

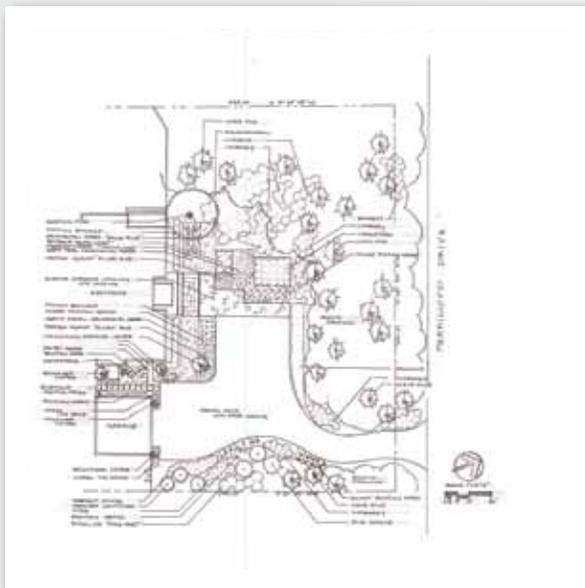
Native plants and deer tolerant ornamental plantings gave way to the use of grasses, boxwoods, perennials and groundcovers. Flowering shrubs were planted for additional color that lend to the woodland feel. *Caryopsis*, rhododendron and inkberry were installed to play off the white pine's textures, withstand the existing shade conditions and comply with the native planting requirements.

Working within the modern geometry, size of the house and spacing of the front door overhang and landing, a series of two foot wide tread steps and a grid like bluestone pathway and landing was created. A three car parking area was desired and to give guests get a sense of entry from the road

and parking court, the walkway was extended the entire length of the parking court inviting all visitors up to the front door. The driveway was fitted with steel edging for a sleek, low-profile look.

An existing *Torulosa Juniper* was transplanted to anchor the large planting bed off the east side of the house. Contrasting low fescue grasses were planted in a grid pattern below and repeat in the far side planting bed. Various heights of plant material play off each other at various times of the year. During the winter and early spring, cut-back grasses reveal a boxwood hedge foundation planting. This creates a strong line enhancing the architecture in being low and wide spreading. A two foot by three foot bluestone pathway to the rear yard through a privet hedge and side garden, giving a feel similar to the front yard. Budget issues were met by planting with perennials that were less expensive for greater square foot coverage of the planting beds.

The design also needed to comply with the town's strict clearing limits and water recharge overlay district area. Therefore, white pine and bayberry were used to meet the re-vegetation criteria and for the water overlay recharge district. The use of mass plantings of grasses and perennials, simple clean lines and groupings for the driveway and front entrance plantings met the client's aesthetic goals. Having this plant palette enhanced both the architectural feel of the house and its immediate surrounds and beyond that, the transition to the woodland.



*Judges' Comments: The extensive use of grasses and pines give the landscape a soft, appealing appearance that is a wonderful foil to the clean, hard lines of the house.*

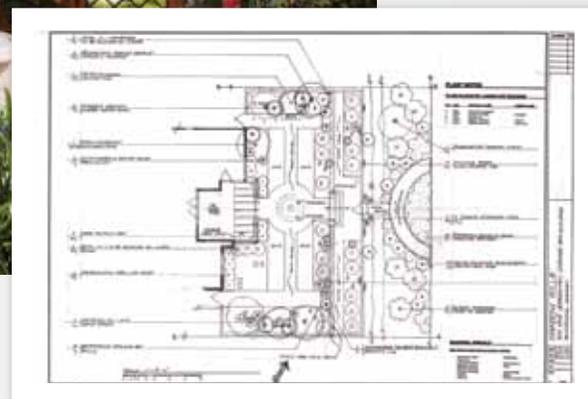


Photo by: Ron Papageorge Photography



Photo by: Granen Studio

*Judges' Comments:* This design, the plants in it, and its relationship to the home and to the surrounding landscape are seamless. The garden has appealing warmth with an abundance of pastel color, and the palette of colors fits well with the color and style of the house.



# Residential Merit Award

## Shadow Hills - Santa Barbara, California

Grace Design Associates, Santa Barbara, California

The client was a former garden writer for the Los AngelesTimes, a very knowledgeable “retired” rosarian and fuchsia expert (there’s a hybrid named after her!) and an avid lifelong gardener. The pressure was on to “get it right” for this savvy homeowner. Her needs included a gopher- and rabbit-free garden space; as many flower beds as possible without having to step in dirt to get to the plants; a reliable irrigation system; a fountain; shade for the existing patio; a neat and tidy groomed look; screening neighbors while maintaining view; some pots for succulents; and a little bit of lawn to provide a place for the eye to rest.

We decided upon a formal layout with walks along primary, secondary, and tertiary axes to divide the space into numerous narrow beds and lawns and provide “clean shoe” access. At the terminal points of axes, we provided places for focal point objects. Benches at the “T” intersections of axes provided visual interest and a welcoming place to sit and take the view. A fountain was placed at the intersection of primary and secondary axes with bedding around it.

To exclude gophers and rabbits, we designed a barrier wall with tight fitting gates. Another low wall adds structure and a unifying backdrop for plantings without obstructing views. Plantings were selected to screen the neighbors, yet maintain a feeling of expansiveness, hold down costs, and minimize opposition to the project from the Home Owners Association.

A perimeter seat wall around the patio provides a sense of enclosure on the patio.

We also terraced the site to accommodate imported soil amendments, add architectural interest – and provide more beds! Informal plantings in a restrained color palette outside of the walled garden blend seamlessly into the view beyond. A dry creek outside of perimeter wall keeps collective neighborhood runoff moving through the property without erosion, and a simple footbridge traverses the creek and adds interest.

The primary axis extends beyond the perimeter wall to strengthen the design, echo the inner garden and lead the eye to the ocean view. Plants outside of the wall are protected by gopher baskets, and a bench was placed next to the community walking path in the welcoming shade of an existing Pepper tree for all to use.

A low retaining wall (stucco over C.M.U.) divides the garden into two level terraces. Formal steps and pilasters, laid out along the primary axis, add elegance, draw the eye to the expansive view and are “neat and tidy.” A wood arbor was installed using custom-made iron posts and brackets. Fiberglass columns were installed over the support posts, and a movable canvas “roof” allows for temperature and brightness adjustment.

# Residential Merit Award

## Family Sanctuary - North Canton, Ohio

Samuel L. Salsbury, APLD and Sabrena Schweyer, APLD  
Salsbury-Schweyer, Inc., Akron, Ohio

With multiple decks and plantings in their backyard, the owners were initially only interested in solving the problems of the steep steps and slippery lawn that led from the backyard to the wooded area beyond. The issues of drainage and of conflicting sight lines immediately came up upon inspection of the site. The owners, gardeners who frequently entertained, had only a very small backyard for such a large property. A comprehensive design offering the best solution to their problems was achieved, opening up exciting possibilities and providing “destinations” while accommodating the grandchildren’s play and a space for very large gatherings.

One of our primary goals was to bring the family “into the experience” of the garden, rather than merely viewing it from across a lawn. We created an intimate setting, separated from the rest of their property by a rose-covered arbor, where they could be surrounded by beauty and tranquility, enjoying fish, and the birds and butterflies that visit, a sanctuary from the outside world.

Layout of the structural elements took careful consideration because many paths led into a small area with multiple angles, and a feeling of “spokes on a wheel” needed to be avoided. By putting the patio on a 30 degree angle, which continues up the very substantial stone steps to the woodland, a dynamic energy, as well as a focal water feature, is created.

The curving stone wall defines the space and with the steps creates a graceful transition from the rectilinear patio to the naturalistic woodland beyond. A path leading up the steps passes through a circle of hand-selected barn stone, acting as art, a meditation circle, and an area for imaginative play.

A wide variety of plants was combined in lush, textural vignettes of foliage and bloom in this zone 5 garden. Bamboo, along with bold foliage and grasses, provide contrast to colorful bloom. On the upper level, mostly native plantings blend naturally into the surrounding pocket of woodland.

Foliage color is an important element in this design though care was taken to retain green as the dominant color. Burgundy-leaved perennials such as Japanese painted fern and *Heuchera* echo the foliage of the Japanese maple, an existing tree that was transplanted. Splashes of chartreuse, gold and cream foliage are sprinkled like sunbeams brightening the shade.

Sustainability guided the design; the site was preserved and materials were reused. A functioning ecosystem was created and water, habitat, and food sources brought wildlife. Many natives and showy, low-care non-natives of varying heights were used. Groundcover perennials replaced the lawn, the patio was dry laid, and local materials and stone were used. No chemicals or pesticides were used, nor was irrigation installed.



*Judges' Comments:* The new stone terrace and garden pool are well-integrated into the background setting of trees, shrubs, and various perennials; the terrace appears well-established as if it were part of the natural landscape.

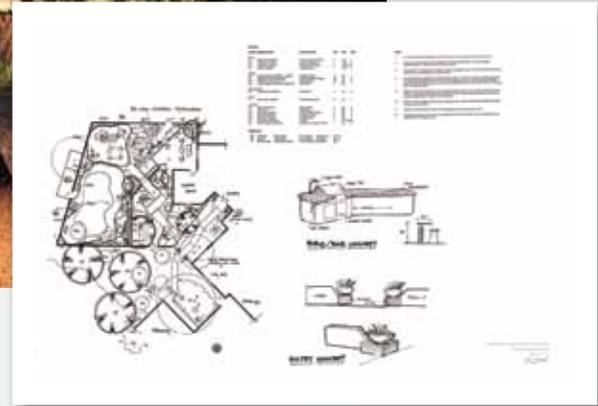
Photo by: Salsbury-Schweyer, Inc.





Photo by: Kathryn Prideaux

*Judges' Comments: The design has maximized the space and is thoughtfully considered and in harmony with its settings...native planting is carefully selected and uses the link with the natural setting perfectly...Textures of wall rendering and colors work well... use of gravel and boulders mixed with planting is relaxed and used with such confidence...a gem of a garden.*



# Residential Merit Award

## Javelina Trails - Tucson, Arizona

Kathryn Prideaux - Prideaux Design, Marana, Arizona

The house, of clean contemporary architecture, is located just inside a desert wash where javelina herds roam freely. The shape of the yard was inconsistent with the architecture of the home, and the entire space needed an update. The clients wanted an environment to draw them outdoors to enjoy the existing pool, to renovate the patio area off the guest room, and add a built-in BBQ to the pool deck area (to be installed in second phase); and to bring the desert that surrounds them into their space.

The design intent was to create a welcoming space that draws guests to the front door, adds screening and privacy between the guest parking and pool areas, gives purpose and beauty to the dry river drainage area, and takes all visual cues from the contemporary architecture of the home.

To prevent sight lines into the pool area from the driveway and guest parking areas, we added three large palo verde trees, which compliment the palo verdes found in the surrounding desert. With swales around the trees, they also benefit from the heavy rainfalls as the water flows through the space.

To create a welcoming entry, we modified a short wall to allow the installation of flanking accent pots. The entry is further highlighted with low-voltage accent lighting that hangs from the mature tree above and casts light on the two potted agaves below.

The entire side yard was divided in two by a large dry river bed to accommodate heavy rains. This bed created the perfect foreground for a small wall that now separates the space, further defining the private pool space from the more public entry.

Ornamental grasses, shrubs, and accent Agaves provide interest and make use of the water as it runs through the area. The new landscape design near the existing pool is consistent with the angles and lines of the home, and ties into the pool deck patio with deliberate gaps. By using the existing angles of the home and running a path parallel to the front portion of the house, the visual lines are lengthened. This creates the perception of more space. The existing patio off of the guest room was redesigned as an ideal spot to relax and enjoy the views: of the yard, the wash, and the desert beyond the walls. The seating area is oriented to provide a diagonal view across the entire space. This visual line, the longest view line of the space, makes the yard appear larger. The planting plan was carefully considered. Each plant was chosen not only for its form and function, but for its color as well. The dark brown and eggplant colors of the hardscape are accented with these colors in the plant material. Bloom colors in yellows and oranges give visual pop. When all was said and done, the homeowners were thrilled. A space they once avoided has now become their favorite feature of the home.



**Landscape Designer of the Year**

# Residential Gold Award

## Harmony Farm - Greenwich, Connecticut

James Doyle Design Associates, Greenwich, Connecticut

A traditional rustic house in Greenwich, Connecticut dates back to the early 1800's, and it stands out greatly from its modern neighbors. After a sympathetic renovation to the home was completed in 2004, a distinctive new landscape was created to compliment the history and setting of the site and fuse it with the architecture.

Set upon four acres, Harmony Farm utilizes a series of stone retaining walls to shape the natural sloping land into usable, flat garden spaces. The house sits at the high point of the property with wetlands at the basin. True to its past, the farm produces organic fruits and vegetables and houses a variety of fowl.

The design process resulted in a dynamic and productive dialogue that intertwines the rustic, natural setting and formal European landscape with usable exterior spaces and activities.

As we began work, the clients had several main priorities, which included the following:

- Retain the distinct natural beauty of the site.
- Design new garden elements to recall the gardens of Europe.
- Install special and distinctive plant material of understated colors.
- Add usable spaces and connect the house with the lower part of the property.



Photo by: Neil Landino



Our intent was to build upon and clarify the relationships between the bucolic countryside landscape and the formal gardens. Careful consideration was given to plant combinations for a structured, pared down gesture. Before the installation, care was taken to save and reuse existing plant material, including several mature apple trees. Two types of locally sourced stones, antique granite slabs and reclaimed field stones, were used to construct the retaining walls and steps that connect the upper and lower sections of the property. Descending from the house, the design evolves from formal spaces to a rustic landscape that echoes the history of the site. An allée of *Taxus capitata* connects the space both aesthetically and physically.

The entry parterre and perennial garden are defined and enclosed by an aerial hedge and low masonry wall. Sheared square plantings of boxwood and hornbeam mark the entrances to the residence and set up clean lines that connect the surrounding spaces. The use of cream colored gravel pathways brightens the entrance parterre, promotes natural drainage, and contrasts with the boldness of the antique granite slab pathway. On axis with the house, the perennial garden emphasizes planting material of understated cool tones.

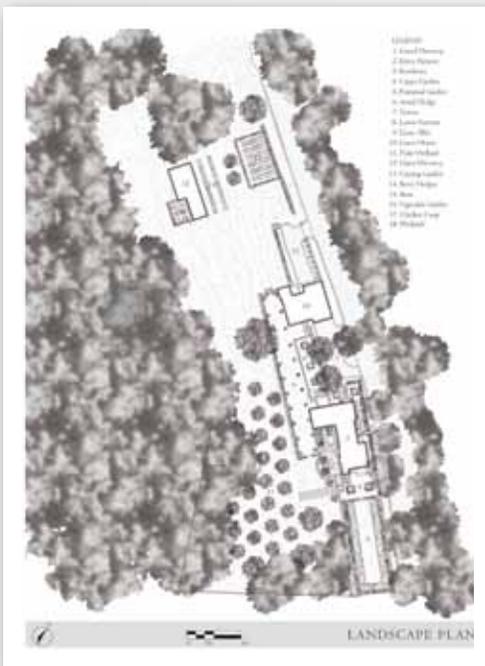
Directly off the back of the house, the permeable brick patio is separated into dining and entertaining spaces by aerial hedges of *Tilia cordata*. Custom-made reclaimed teak furniture and a custom stone fireplace complete the space. A series of two smaller stone retaining walls connect the lower *Taxus allée* from the entry parterre. Sheared square plantings of boxwood and hornbeams are repeated and act as a transitional element between the elevations.

The composition of the *Taxus capitata* allée provides both a visual and physical experience as it has direct access from



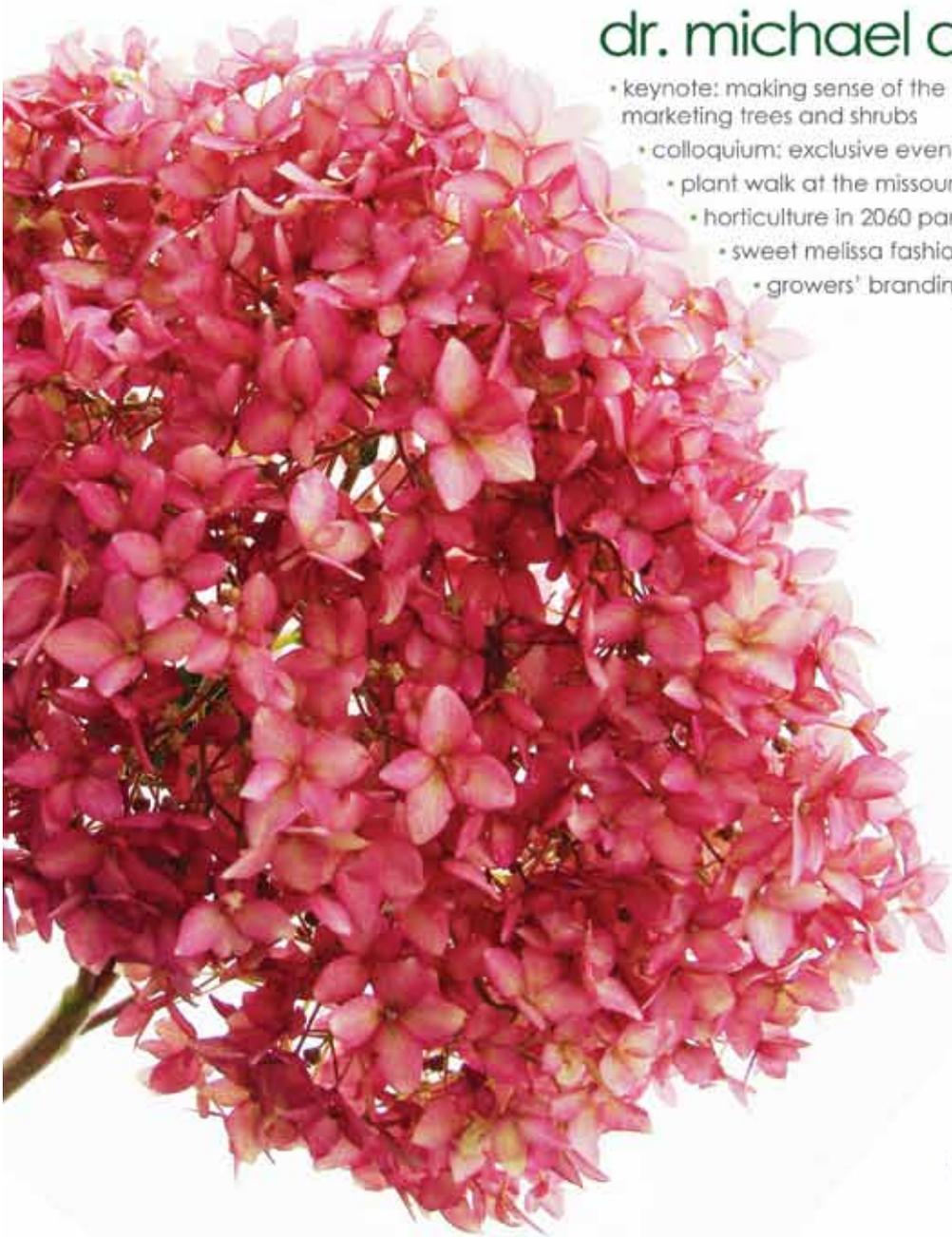
both sides of the house and is also the main passageway between the top and bottom of the property. The hornbeam hedge establishes a degree of enclosure in all of the landscape spaces. Drought tolerant fescue grass with the addition of *Asclepias verticillata* softens the sheared plantings and showcases the mixture of rustic and traditional landscape.

Another key component of the site is the agrarian landscape elements which add scenery to the property and biodiversity. A fruit orchard laid out in a diagonal grid parallel to the slope consists of old, antique English specimens of plum, apple, and pear trees. In addition, a vegetable and cutting garden and rows of raspberry and blackberry give the clients a link to the past history of the property. Continuity of style and materials in the landscape can be clearly seen in the landscape elements throughout the levels of the property. The reappearance of materials and patterns throughout the landscape ensures that the mixed outdoor spaces flow from one to another seamlessly and harmoniously.



**Judges' comments:** Strong visual impact, memorable sense of place. The design is well connected to the house and to the sense of history. Excellent use of scale, proportion, and harmony in the built elements and architectural (sheared) plantings. Materials choices reinforce the sense of place. Craftsmanship is exquisite.





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# Interview with our Landscape Designer of the Year: James Doyle Design Associates

By: William Healy, APLD and APLD Awards Chair



## 2010 APLD International Landscape Designer of the Year for the Harmony Farm Project

**James Doyle**, Principal

**Kathryn Herman**, Partner

**Matthew Willinger**, Landscape Designer

### James Doyle Design Associates

James Doyle Design Associates has a strong team approach, and they deserve the term. In a recent phone interview, James used the word "we" very naturally. I was going to interview him to discuss the APLD 2010 International Landscape Designer of the Year Award for the Harmony Farm Project. James insisted I not only interview him, but also his partner Kathryn Herman, and the lead designer on the project, Matthew Willinger. The project was a product of their entire team, and all three attended the APLD International Design Conference in Dallas in September to receive the award.

James Doyle Design Associates is a design firm with an office of ten members. James and Kathryn are both landscape designers, and the firm also has six other designers and two landscape architects. They produce schematic designs, construction documentation and handle project management of installations. They oversee every aspect of each project, including both subcontracted and allied craftsman work, as well as future maintenance.

James is from Ireland, and came up through the great tradition of gardening there. When he was chosen to be the head gardener of a Russell Page Garden, he intensified his concentration in landscape design.

The economy in Ireland led to his decision to settle in Connecticut and it was there he started his operations in 1993. Kathryn joined

in 2001 and is credited with building the business with James into one with an international reputation. Kathryn also has a history in APLD. She was the former head of the APLD District in Connecticut, Rhode Island, New York and New Jersey and actually met James through her recruiting efforts to get other area designers to join APLD. She studied landscape design at New York Botanical Garden and with Penelope Hobhouse. She is also a trustee at the Institute of Classical Architecture and Classical America. Matthew has a degree in Art History and Literature from New York University and he studied landscape design and horticulture at the New York Botanical Garden. He has been involved with various volunteer programs dedicated to improving the green environment of New York.

Their firm is located in Greenwich – and as James can much better say with his Irish accent, "We're happy to be in a great area with great homes and great clients."

### Design methods

The timeless design style associated with Russell Page - bold structure, strong clean lines, masterful plant selection, and proper restraint - does show in much of the work of James Doyle Design Associates, but Kathryn strongly points out that their inspiration comes from many aspects of design and nature. They often travel, frequently abroad, to be continually fueled with inspiration. Particularly favored design sites mentioned were Sissinghurst, Hidcote, Bury Court, and Tuinen Mien Ruys. They had even visited and were versed in some of the humanized landscapes here in Northeast Ohio. They express equal reverence for modern as well as the classical design, and it shows throughout their projects.

Using strong geometry, clean symmetry and masterful plant texture, they strive to harmonize strong architecture with suitably beautiful surroundings.

With such a finely honed edge to their work, they are involved with the long term proper maintenance of their projects. They have long term relationships with clients and have had ongoing projects that have lasted 15 years or more.

When I asked how they respond to the apparent high degree of maintenance needed, James responded that structured planting maintenance needs are not as high as might be expected. The mowing, yes; but properly timed plant pruning may only be once a year, and the maintenance time can be considerably less than that needed in elaborate perennial gardens or vegetable design. They pay strict attention to implement sustainable methods in their construction techniques and material choices.

Quite a few of their clients are younger, possessing homes of great architecture, and may have a more modern aesthetic. Such preferences fit well with the work of James Doyle Design Associates, for they particularly enjoy bridging the past and the future. When designing the Harmony Farm project, these aspects certainly came into play.

### Harmony Farm

James pointed out that this project in Connecticut exemplifies the wonderful combination of a great site, great architecture, sensitive restoration, and a great client.

Set upon four acres, the home at Harmony Farm offered a beautiful setting and had undergone extensive and sensitive restoration. The renovation created a new entrance to the farm house. The clients admired classical design, were Franco and Anglophiles, and were well acquainted with garden design. They were also familiar with the work of James Doyle Design Associates, with whom they contracted for the landscape of the farm.

The design firm created a dynamic connection between the rustic setting and a formalized European landscape. The design created usable spaces, for there was no former easy connection between the home and lower portions of the property. Matthew pointed out that the drama came from the grade.

Utilizing a series of expertly crafted stone retaining walls, the sloping land was converted into a series of usable garden spaces. Locally sourced stone, antique granite slabs and reclaimed field stone were expertly crafted into the farm's pavement and walls. Many of the slabs came in one per truck. Extra care was taken during the construction process to protect and utilize existing plants, including very old apple trees and maples.

Off the back of the house, a permeable brick surfaced area was laid and the enclosure was crafted with cubed *Tilia cordata* to create dining and entertaining spaces. Custom furniture was fashioned from reclaimed teak and a stone fireplace built to complement the space. These areas lead down to a new perennial garden featuring cool tones.

A formally sheared allée of *Taxus capitata* formed the main passageway down to the property's lower part. The strong structure of the evergreens march in contrast to a soft ground covering of drought tolerant fescue dotted with *Asclepias verticillata* and other wild flowers. Hornbeam and beech hedging is utilized to provide enclosure throughout the property. The repetition of materials and structured patterns glues the spaces into harmony.

With regard to maintenance of Harmony Farm, Matthew pointed out that much of the plant material was specifically selected to be low maintenance without extreme irrigation.

Elements of a working farm added to the design and biodiversity of the site. Matthew said that many areas of the property were designed for the purpose of enabling the clients to grow fruit and cut flowers which they actively enjoy cultivating themselves. A diagonally laid fruit orchard grows antique English specimens of plum, apple and pear. Matthew sourced twenty rare antique apple cultivars specifically for the project. Garden areas for vegetable and cutting flowers, as well as rows of raspberry and blackberry also offer a link to the past history of the site. Not to mention the chickens.

The design process intertwined both the rustic and European into usable exterior landscapes that retained the natural beauty of the site and reflected the strong structure and clean lines of European design. The effort resulted in a study of skillful restraint.

In concluding our interview, I asked if their own gardens showed similar strong lined design, and Kathryn mentioned that her residence does show significant structure and clean lines, but James explained his garden, including quite a collection of tropicals, presently exists in a myriad of various pots, for he is in the gardener's disfavored activity of moving.



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# Residential Gold Award

## Walsh-Sheridan - Lewes, Delaware

Scott Brinitzer Design Associates, Arlington, Virginia

The beautiful 1830's stucco home in Lewes, Delaware, is located on a very large lot, separated into two parcels by a public road: The first section of the property, situated on the north side of the street, was a large lawn area with a single bay shrub (*Laurus nobilis*) near the street and *Juniperus virginiana* along the east property line. The main portion of the property, on the south side of the street, included the home, a plastic pool directly behind the house, and a large grassy meadow bordered by overgrown trees and shrubs.

The layout of the property was very unique: none of the property lines were at right angles and the lot was quite narrow and long. The clients intended to transform the house into a weekend home for themselves where they could entertain friends and their large extended families. They wanted the property to become something of a family "compound," a place so relaxing, attractive, and functional that there would be little reason to venture beyond the grounds. In addition, the clients had traveled extensively and

visited many beautiful properties throughout the world. They wanted to include elements from their travels in the garden design, such as Italian cypress, a fireplace, and a waterfall. They were also interested in having a cutting garden and a space to grow herbs.

The design intent was to create an environment that was soothing and private, one that created exterior spaces that flowed seamlessly from interior rooms; that met the clients many and varied requests; that responded to the natural attributes of the land; and that looked as though it belonged, or fit, with the house and blended with the neighbor's property. I also wanted to minimize the impact of the oddly shaped property on the garden experience. The garden needed to comfortably exist within the greater context of the overall landscape and in its final form, diminish the peculiar relationship between the house and the property lines.

The project included work with the interior architect to site a large addition to the house that met local setback requirements. I also worked with the neighbor to the east to create a unified planting plan that allowed the properties to blend more smoothly. The scope of work eventually entailed locating a pool, a spa, a "spring house," a fireplace, a waterfall, an outdoor dining garden, an herb garden, a private "contemplation garden," overflow car parking, a large perennial garden, a boat house and dock.



*Judges' comments: A very unique site (in terms of shape and proportion) and an impressive design solution to deal with it. Excellent use of hard landscape materials, finished to a very high standard. The plant combinations are particularly effective, adding to the endlessly flowing feeling of this long skinny site, a unified whole between architecture and landscape.*



**The design ultimately included the following specific features:**

- **The Canal Garden:** Located on the north side of the street, the canal garden is characterized by a sizeable lawn promenade with shrub and perennial borders that lead to the dock and boat house. The lawn area serves as overflow parking on weekends and during large events. All plants were selected to withstand strong winds and to be salt tolerant.
- **The Front Garden:** Large drifts of familiar shore plants, including Knockout roses and blue hydrangeas, define a simple and memorable front garden that compliments the historic façade.
- **The Dining Terrace:** Previously an unused area off the kitchen, this area was transformed into an extension of the kitchen and dining room. Seat walls, a large fireplace and a generously sized patio are the main design elements.

- **The Herb Garden:** A pre-existing pool was removed and a new building addition was sited. Roses and clematis climb on the pergola that replicates the columns of the front porch. A classically inspired herb and boxwood “parterre” has a central circular fountain and is conveniently located just outside the galleria, easily accessible to the kitchen. Foster hollies screen the neighbors and give a strong backdrop to the garden.

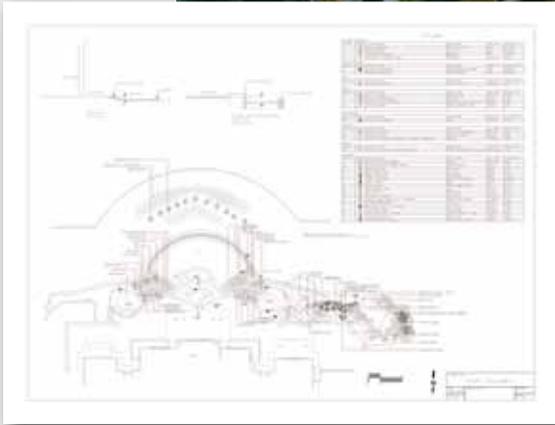
- **The Pool and Spa Terrace:** The summer house addition, located on the property with the interior architect, opens up onto the pool and spa area. The spa, pool, garden walls, planters, waterfall, plantings and springhouse were all designed and constructed under my direct supervision. Loblolly pines, camellias, hydrangea, and Italian cypress trees are included in this garden.

- **The Contemplative Garden:** Accessible through the springhouse and through the neighbor’s garden, the Contemplative Garden lies just beyond the Pool Terrace and offers a “secret garden” for solitary moments and quiet conversations. The garden features gently curving planting beds that flow into the neighboring property, which serves as a borrowed landscape.

To be environmentally friendly, plants were carefully selected to thrive in this specific microclimate. Special care was given to create plant combinations, such as loblolly pines and camellias, that would benefit both plants. To minimize runoff into the water, the Canal Garden is not fertilized. All water run off on the property is held on site, as the sandy soil is able to absorb the water. Finishes on the addition, such as the actual cladding on the house, the garden furniture, the pool color, the interior finish and the boat house design were not under my control.



Photo by: Amelia B. Lima



*Judges' Comments: The design is successful in integrating the various areas of the site, with each flowing rather comfortably into the next.*

# Residential Merit Award

## Pool Garden - Rancho Santa Fe, California

Amelia B. Lima, APLD - Amelia B. Lima and Associates, San Diego, California

This garden in Rancho Santa Fe, Sunset zone 23 in California, had a newly constructed swimming pool when I began my involvement. I was brought in after the pool shell was completed, and commissioned to create a plan for the new patio, steps and landscape. My intent was to create a seamless transition between the three levels of existing stone patio, new spa deck, and garden connected to the existing landscape.

The new oversized vanishing edge pool sits about seven feet higher than an old pool formerly did. The pool contractor buried the existing pool with soil and formed the new one directly above it. The existing stone pool decks, as well as the steps that lead to them, were also buried in lieu of demolition. A wide stone marking the perimeter of the old pool deck was left intact, sitting eighteen inches beneath the new pool's water level. Below this lies a large hill descending to the rest of the landscape. The pool has a vanishing edge so client can take in the view of the lake below and the division between the surfaces of pool and lake are blurred.

I specified decomposed granite for the media used to raise the soil level around the new pool and stone planters. Motivated by the desire to populate the new landscape with succulent plants, the granite allows for good compaction while maintaining satisfactory drainage for the plantings.

Drains were also installed in strategic spots to guarantee fast drainage in a heavy downpour. A drip system was used, and a soaker hose system buried around the stepping-stone ensures moisture for the thyme, without wetting the walkway. Steel edges installed in a sinuous pattern create a contrast within the gravel, and keep the thyme within its borders.

New curved steps echo the curved lines of the new pool. French limestone was used for the coping and on the steps is a light cream color, contrasting with the dark water. In the evening low voltage lighting in the nearby oak and under each step bring out the curved lines of these steps very distinctly, and they seem to float off into the night. The lights hung higher among the oak's branches have a light blue filter which creates a moonlit effect, tracing an intricate design over the walkway and garden.

The plant palette, in tune with the environmental limitations, help to minimize water and maintenance needs. The use of agaves and other strongly architectural plants creates a stark contrast when viewed against the water. In a Mediterranean climate, water is a luxury, and the designer should always consider how efficiently such a precious resource is utilized. The pool remains the focal point, while the landscape and paved areas work together to complement and frame the view resulting in a feeling of elegance and simplicity.

# Residential Merit Award

## Todd Drive Residence - East Hampton, New York

Richard G. Shuster, APLD - R.G. Shuster & Company, Southampton, New York

The homeowners purchased this property on the eastern end of Long Island as a second home to be near the ocean beaches. Situated on less than two-thirds of an acre, they missed the privacy they'd had at their previous weekend home. Even though there was a woodland reserve in the back of their property, it didn't sufficiently block the house on the far side of it, and houses on other sides of the property were also in view.

The heavily wooded acreage had covenants and setback requirements which severely limited the amount of clearing allowable. The property is located in a town-designated water recharge area, which demands a design that diminishes the amount of clearing and tree removal. Although the present landscape was neat, it did nothing to draw you out from the house, and did nothing to connect the the interior and exterior spaces of the residence. Along the back property line the grade sloped down towards the pool and created a lopsided visual. The focal point from the house looked directly to a shrub hedge -- an attempt to hide the pool equipment. The existing deck (on one side of the pool) wasn't big enough for comfortable outdoor living.

In addition to privacy, the homeowners wanted an abundant amount of flowering plant material but not too many colors or fussy- looking planting beds. They requested a "comfortable modern" style, but not too "minimalist and

stark." Four-season interest was important since the clients planned to use their home weekends throughout the year, plus longer periods during the summer. They wanted flowers blooming spring through fall, with an emphasis on July and August. They also wanted a design that allowed them to walk in their garden.

The primary design objectives were a stylish landscape to complement the contemporary style of the home, to maximize privacy, and to develop a relaxed modern landscape that forms outdoor rooms yet flows and integrates the entire property.

Due to town requirements, we were not able to remove established trees, so they were pruned to allow in as much light as possible. Stucco retaining walls were built to establish a strong contemporary relationship between the house and exterior spaces. They create elevations for interest and movement, hide pool equipment, and are repeated in the arrival court for unity and practicality. The pool decking was enlarged and separated into functional areas with the incorporation of a planting bed of *Calamagrostis*. Planting beds were arranged in a contemporary fashion and planted with "four-season" interest, with large sweeps of flowering plants and shrubs. Planting areas and shrub placement were selected so they wouldn't interfere with the health of existing trees.

*Judges' Comments: A striking result in a small space – the finishes and scale suit the home perfectly. A lovely scheme responding well to the brief, the property and surrounding environment... Clean lines, accentuated by simple and appropriate planting.*



# Residential Merit Award

## Winnetka Residence - Winnetka, Illinois

Brian Jordison - James Martin Associates, Vernon Hills, Illinois

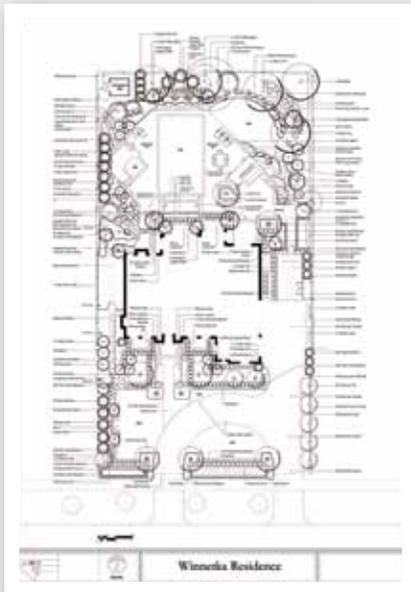
This newly-built house in Winnetka (zone 5) was purchased by the owners because of the possibilities it held for the creation of an outdoor living area that would serve them both as a tranquil oasis and the setting for social gatherings.

We initially began the design process with multiple concepts including not only a patio and pool but an outdoor kitchen space. The idea developed of seeing the pool from not only the first floor but also from the basement windows and it became the driving force for the final design. To achieve this, the pool was at grade with a waterfall cascading into a sunken trough near the house. Concrete block window wells in the basement were lowered to capture the views to the backyard. The spa was set above grade for easy access and to create an overlook of the pool waterfall and surrounding gardens. Stone matching the house was used to build the spa and kitchen walls. The kitchen area has dedicated spaces for the smoker, gas grill, warming oven, and refrigerator, and a dining area with a granite counter top. The pool deck was constructed in bluestone, set on a compacted gravel base, complete with a misting system to keep it cool during the sunny summer days.

For the front, the design intent was to create a clean and formal entry to the property. The front walk was redesigned to best display Foo Dog sculptures the owners had collected and wished to integrate into the landscape. Columns and a

low garden wall of stone matching the house were added along the front of the property, pulling elements of the house into the landscape and reinforcing the formal lines of the plant material. Because the existing concrete driveway pavers did not enhance the new design of the landscape, they were removed and replaced with granite cobble banding and bluestone chips. A more durable, upgraded concrete paver type better suited to the front design was installed near the garage doors.

We took on the role of general contractor for the entire project, managing the pool and drainage, irrigation and lighting contractors. We installed simple gardens around the pool to complement the owner's Chinese sculptures. Sedums, ferns, sempervivum, and boxwood were used for their Asian flair and red-leafed Japanese maples effectively tied the landscape to the artwork and created sight lines in the planting areas. Chanticleer pears and boxwood present clean lines in harmony with the formal architecture. Arborvitae and spruce create a natural backdrop and improve the privacy. Because of the amount of impervious surface that was proposed, the village suggested that a retention system be installed, minimizing runoff to the local storm water system. A drainage system with 120 lf of 48" diameter pipes was carefully buried under the lawn area of the backyard so that it would not impact the extant mature shade trees.



*Judges' comments: A very strong and coherent design. Spatially well balanced (with) excellent use of structural plants. The hard landscaping finish is superb.*



Photo by: Linda Oyama Bryan



Photo by: MJ McCabe and Michael F. Brett



*Judges' Comments:* Great solution to camouflaging problem view, while preserving what was left--and actually making it more precious. A simple, yet thoughtful scheme with great details. The design does a good job in capturing the quality of a Japanese garden with appropriate materials and many attractive details.

# Small Gardens Merit Award

## Brockett's Point - Branford, Connecticut

Mary-Jane McCabe - MJ McCabe Garden Design, Northford, Connecticut

It is a drama that plays out year after year in so many shoreline communities; you have a home near the water from which you can see the ocean. It's a good view, but over the years some of that vista was lost as houses were squeezed in to the left and right. Nevertheless, the home, built on a granite ledge, was high enough above the water for a view out over the harbor, the islands and clear to the horizon. The roof of a small cottage that sat just below the backyard ledge actually added to that charm.

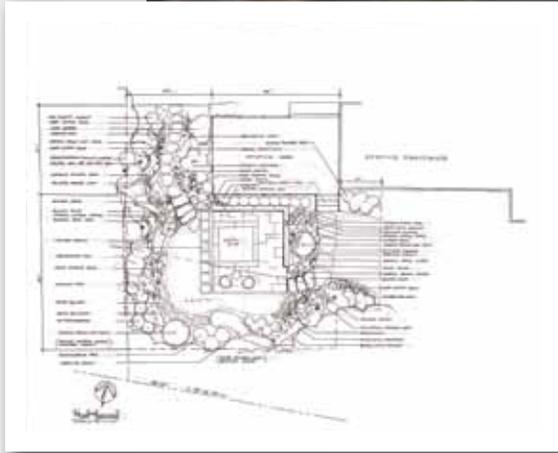
Unfortunately, that little summer cottage was sold and torn down. It was replaced by a house that rose up above that ledge, obliterating precious views. It also included a large window with a bright chandelier that lit the backyard, and most rooms of the home, every night. Although my clients fought it, there was nothing they could do to stop it. When we met with the clients, the question was, "What can we do to make that house go away?"

Our intent was to restore privacy and reconnect the client to the site by shifting the focus inward, to a more contemplative garden. We also wanted to preserve two remaining ocean

views, mere slivers. We looked to classic Japanese gardens for inspiration in creating a garden that instilled this sense of permanence, harmony, and continuity.

The true potential of the garden did not emerge until a scale model was built, the selling point of the project. The client could see the proposed Machiai, stone garden, walls, fencing, and paths— all the hardscape. The Machiai, or waiting arbor, was intrinsic to the overall design. Its scale fit well within the confines of the new garden. The simplicity of this structure allows a nice respite while redirecting the view inward. It included a cut-out window that captured a wonderful slice of water and shoreline while eliminating all unwanted views.

The stone garden was framed with lengths of quarry-cut granite. It contained two very large granite stones that were hand-picked at the quarry and delivered on flatbed for placement. We designed three stone walls. Two on the north were staggered for a sense of greater depth, and the third wall ran at 90 degrees on the east end. The area was "fenced" with three varieties of bamboo planted on the ledge side within a 36 inch deep polyethylene barrier.



**Judges' Comments:** The spa area is well-integrated into the site and does an excellent job in connecting the surrounding woodland to the deck and house. Clear intent, strong impact...elegant use of materials... the paving stones in the lawn make a nice transition from pool to lawn...The space functions very well... excellent workmanship, beautiful integration of materials.

# Specialty Project Merit Award

## Woodland Spa - Southampton, New York

Barry Block - Barry Block Landscape Design and Contracting, East Moriches, New York

Located in a heavily wooded area, the property is surrounded by a nature preserve and scenic easement that can not be developed. The house was newly constructed on spec by a builder, and our clients purchased it as a weekend retreat. They wanted to add an outdoor gunite spa and bluestone patio to create a therapeutic relaxing retreat in the back yard, separate from the other areas of the property, such as the pool and patio, yet connected as well. They also asked that the new spa and landscape blend into the natural woodland setting and complement new foundation plantings with lots of seasonal interest.

The major challenge was the placement of the spa and patio. With this in mind, together with the setback restraints and existing location of an underground well, we were forced to work within the steepest grade changes on the property. Designing an intimate space off the deck was the best option, and we opted for a sunken spa patio and terrace that can only be seen from the south facing side of the deck above it.

To gain access from the house to the spa, the existing deck was modified and new steps with railings were installed. The spa patio repeats the same bluestone pattern as the pool patio on the far side of the property. Decorative colonial bluestone masonry retaining walls were used to hold the

upper grade and also act as an additional sitting area around the spa patio. Two separate sets of boulder staircases were installed to make the transition from the spa patio to the side and rear yards. Natural Long Island boulders were used as accents within the boulder staircases along with plantings. Two by two dry-laid bluestone pavers were used on the west side of the spa to allow room for circulation and comply with setback limits.

Sun and shade tolerant plants were selected that made a good transition into the surrounding woodland. Two separate pathways of flagstones take you either up to the deck and side yard or through a lush planted winding walkway which leads you to the open lawn and pool area beyond. Evergreen and deciduous shrubs, along with perennials were planted to further create a sense of seclusion and separation. Three specimen Japanese maples were strategically planted to help pull together all the surrounding spaces.

Low voltage landscape lighting creates a mystical evening feeling and mood through the use of pathway lights, boulder and staircase accents, and uplighting on trees. When the spa is in use and the area fills with mist, one really gets the sense they are deep in the woods in a very special secluded place.

# Speciality Project Merit Award

## Bird of Paradise - Tucson, Arizona

Paul Connolly, APLD - Sundrea Design Studio, Tucson, Arizona

An early 60's ranch style house, designed by the homeowner's late husband and built primarily of red brick and gray concrete, included a big pool with diving board and slide in the middle of a relatively small backyard. It was surrounded by dilapidated concrete decking and had many unsightly garden elements.

The client wanted to update the backyard with a renovated pool and outdoor kitchen, a fireplace and spa, with a unique design to accommodate large groups.

First, we removed many of the awkward elements in order to create a unified, cohesive space, create outdoor living areas, and find space for the homeowner's collection of pots. We also wanted to design a unique environment to reflect the character and personality of the home and its owner.

The west-side bamboo hedge was removed to open up the space; while the north-side hedge was pruned to provide a lush wall to screen the neighbor. The existing *Strelitzia reginae* along the back of the house became an inspiration for the new landscape design. The interior red brick flooring was extended out into the landscape by creating three separate landings at three sliding glass doors. From the house, the landings follow the diagonal line of the pool and create an interesting rhythmic pattern along the back of the house. The landings function as a critical transition from the rectangular house to the diagonal pool edge; and from the interior to exterior.

From the landings, there is a step down to the concrete patio/pool deck in beige. Widely spaced expansion joints make the backyard feel more open and inviting. Stucco was introduced for the new BBQ counter, raised spa, and raised firepit to help the three structures stand out against the concrete and brick. Each element was painted a different color, inspired by an existing African bird of paradise.

Instead of just replacing the existing wood fence with a new one, I designed a series of metal panels inspired by patterns on the house. Each panel is a rusted steel cut-out, mounted two inches off a 6'x8' piece of solid black steel. With no views beyond the backyard, it was important to create views within the yard. The panels, along with the raised firepit and spa, create a dramatic view at one end of the pool. At the other end of the pool, I collaborated with a local glass artist to install a series of custom-made glass plates and a conceptual glass water feature.

While this landscape design is fairly extensive, including unique challenges and creative solutions, it required only eight new plants. Much thought was given to maintaining the existing vegetation and incorporating the new hardscapes into and around the decades old softscape. The end result is a hardscape and softscape that work together as one cohesive landscape plan.

*Judges' Comments: Creative, playful yet sophisticated... good grasp of scale and proportion - new elements prominent enough that they don't look trite or under scaled... indoors extended into outdoors through paving - very nice... good use of colors - intense and saturated, but not garish or too harsh... clever use of metal fence module (rotating for variety).*

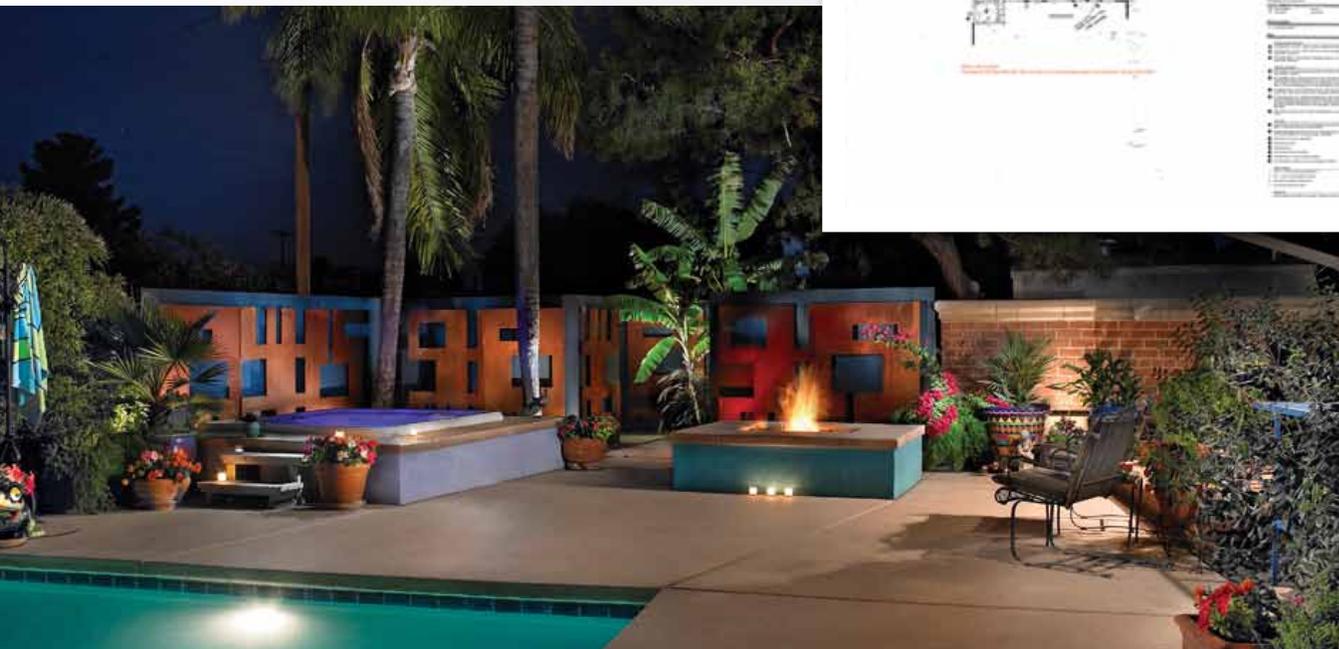
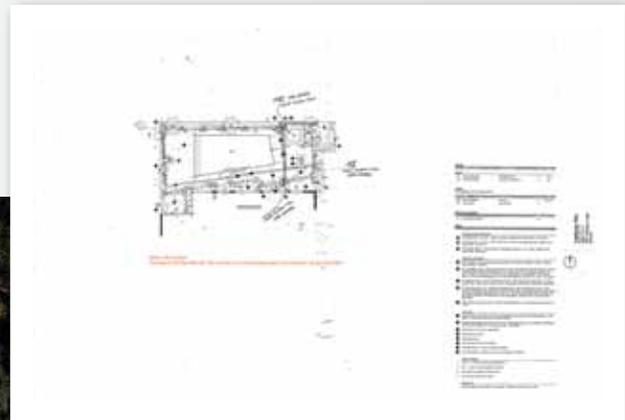


Photo by: Robin Stancliff Photography

# Speciality Project Merit Award

## Steve Kristo - Eau Claire, Wisconsin

Douglas Owens-Pike and the EnergyScapes Team  
 EnergyScapes, Inc., Minneapolis, Minnesota

On a four-acre plus estate, the clients wanted less lawn and more diversity and beauty. They also wanted a better way to guide guests from the driveway to the front door (instead of the service entry); enhanced privacy and improved views from the house. In addition, they requested a low maintenance landscape, the establishment of a wildlife habitat, and the removal of exotic invasive weeds.

The design intent was to restore native plant communities on the estate in order to reduce the amount of chemicals and energy required to maintain the landscape, to apply the principles of ecological sustainability to transform the landscape to meet the client's family needs, and to create lovely gardens with beauty that progresses through seasons.

To meet the client's requests, the lawn was replaced with native plants, the public street was converted into a private driveway by narrowing the pavement, and the land was

reshaped to improve the surface water flow into a private driveway turn-around loop. Temporary fencing was installed to protect plantings from deer until a permanent fence was installed around the perimeter of property. Deer had formerly used the site as a travel corridor through the creek valley.

In all, we installed a new driveway, about two thousand perennial grasses and native plants along the drive, shrubs along the drive as well, and at the edge of the marsh, a stepping stone path, patio, and bench.

To protect the watershed, lawn areas were replaced with deep-rooted native plants, and we created a rain garden to slow pavement runoff before it enters the marsh. Habitat was created for food for wildlife, and we took steps to control invasive plants like reed canary grass, glossy and upland buckthorn, and non-native species planted by a previous landscape company.



*Judges' Comments: The use of native plants makes the house and roadways appear settled into the surrounding landscape. Great scheme with a varied and complex palette of planting...shows good planting and spacing of smaller plants and clearly good horticultural knowledge to understand plants and spacing to achieve the look... trees and specimens well sited as are rocks and pathways.*

Photo by: Douglas Owens-Pike





*Judges' comments: Cute as a button from start to finish... Creative, fun, delightful... I want one! Clear design intent... high creativity... responsive to site... harmonious materials, artfully designed and constructed... high technical merit, good execution and workmanship*

# Specialty Project Merit Award

## The Great Treehouse Caper - Pleasantville, Ohio

Richard J. Harper, APLD - The Creative Landscaping Co., Chandler, Indiana

A client in Ohio contacted us with an unusual request: to design and construct a special garden structure for two to six year olds. The client wanted a tree house, but with an unusual design: it was not to be built on posts, and there were several inclusions as well. He wanted a hidden trapdoor entry; a Dutch door with a magnetic chalkboard; a fireman's pole; rope balusters; and to utilize at least some of the barn wood found in the families' farm barns. Those initial requests quickly grew to include a play platform of about 250 square feet at a lower level, 11 feet above ground level.

When I went to see the site, I discovered a great old 68 inch caliper maple in excellent condition and whose shape was ready-made for a tree house. I realized, for the first time in my 36 years in this business, that I was not able to put together a totally detailed plan, as "The Tree" was going to define what we were going to do.

We did the necessary checking with the National Arborists' Association about protecting the tree. It was determined that the health of tree would not be compromised with the minimal attachments we were going to make. We have been asked many times how we achieved the curved shape of the roof and sides of the house. By trial and error, we took 2" x 10" boards and cut away everything that didn't look like a "cartoonish" tree house. All exterior surfaces of the structure are Western red cedar and redwood.

To avoid the "built-on-posts" look our client did not want, we used 7000# cables fabricated by a local mining supplier, slide joints, a knee brace and, yes, we did use one supporting post, OK'd by our client. Since the house was constructed almost entirely on the ground, we craned the treehouse on the pre-constructed base 16 feet high into the tree. Final details were installed with the house in place: plexiglas windows, Dutch door, planted window boxes, chimney, the stainless steel fireman's pole, the hidden entry ladder and trapdoor, the antique wooden pulley and wooden bucket to be used as a dumb waiter, and the mailbox.

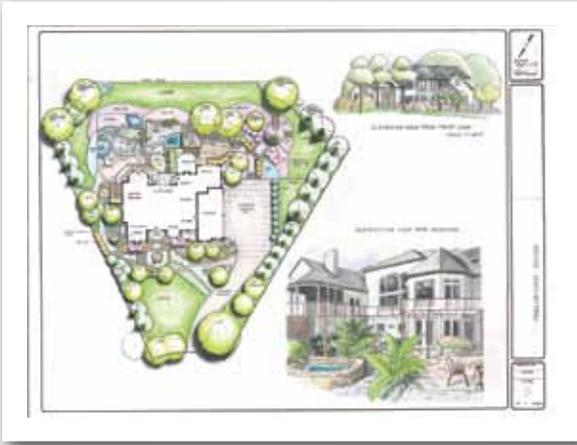
The first weekend the project was completed, the clients had 30 mini and full-sized visitors. The tree and the structure have survived the winds of Hurricane Ike, two winters of snows, ice and winds, and the treehouse still sits fully intact ... in that great old tree. The size of the platform allows for larger gatherings (dinner for seven, one night a few weeks ago - *Really!*) or activities that require more room - toy construction equipment or dance parties (*both true - by the way*).

The intimacy of the upper house portion was perfect for three to six year olds to have their first slumber party... with their flashlights by their sides. During the past year, the treehouse structure and its platform have been: a pirate ship, a lookout for spies, a farm harvest observation deck ... not to mention the *HUGE* advantage it has given its visitors... in *snowball fights*.

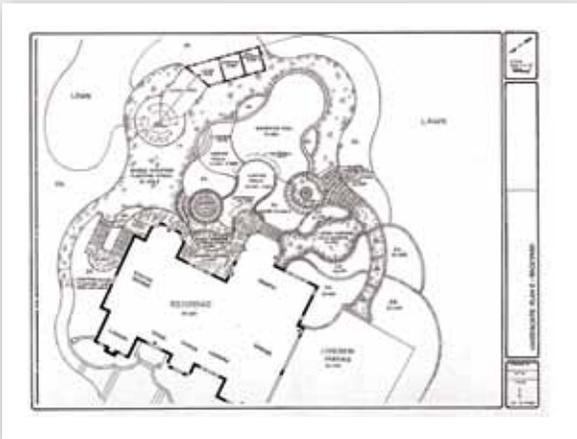
# Student Winner

## Jackson Residence

Jing Zhang, Cuyahoga Community College



This residence is located in northeast Ohio, where winters are normally wet and cold and summers mild and cool. The client's house was New American, which embraces the idea of uninterrupted flow and luxury style. It has a gray stone and cream stucco façade with Palladian windows.



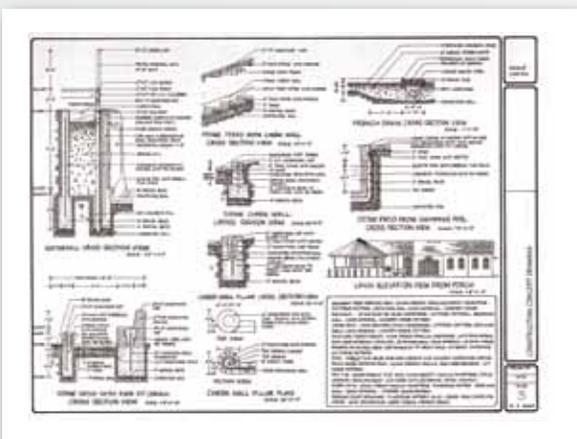
The clients wanted a design for the entire property, including a front terrace with sculpture/garage court and drive, walkways to the back yard, and many new features, including outside entertaining spaces, a spa, firepit and gazebo, new plantings throughout, and perhaps a pool and waterfall.

The main design concept is built around patterns of seashells and sea waves, except for a formal front entry patio.



At the back of the house, an open area includes a swimming pool/wading pools with blue, pink and white pebble tiles and gray stone coping; an angled lanai provides an outside cooking and entertaining area. The lanai has a conical roof gazebo with open kitchen/bar and living area, connected with living, dressing and pool equipment rooms with Palladian windows.

Stone patios around the swimming pool, combined with the pool, will create a huge sea shell pattern in the back yard. Evergreen and flowering shrubs and perennials around the pool compliment this pattern. Large deciduous trees and perennials around the pool area will provide good visual backdrop and focal points.



The upper level of the house has a wooden walkway and two small decks with a seashell pattern metal handrail. The first small deck will be located at the west side of the house for a resting area. Evergreen shrubs, tropical plants and perennials will go into a small rock garden in the front and shade trees, flowering shrubs, and perennials will be installed in back to create a "sea wave" effect.

A second small deck will be located beside the porch, with a single cascade waterfall under the deck that flows into a wading pool.

Several stone patios and retaining walls are built for entertaining space:

In the front yard, there will be a "formal" patio outside the with two sided curved retaining walls pillars at the ends. A sculpture will be located in the center of the patio. Topiary evergreen and flowering trees will be used for focal points. Other plantings around the sculpture and four corners of the patio will create a colorful slope and "sea wave." The garage court and circular driveway will be built in a seashell pattern with stone patterned concrete. The garage court has flowering trees, flowering shrubs and perennials along the edge. The circular driveway contains a round knot garden in the center planted with different colored flowering perennials. The east and west side of the property will be planted with screening plants, including evergreen trees, large evergreen shrubs and ornamental grasses.

# APLD Student Spotlight

An interview with Jing Zhang, the 2010 International Student Landscape Design Awards program winner

By: Jules Bruck, PhD, APLD & APLD Education Chair



## ***How did you become interested in the field of landscape design?***

Before I enrolled in the landscape design/build program at Cuyahoga Community College (Tri-C), I was a scientific researcher working in the field of biomedical science. I worked hard and published more than ten papers in eight years, but I always felt there was a voice in my heart that said my life should not go on only as a researcher. I could not devote myself to my job; I could not find happiness and excitement in my job. Before my family moved to Cleveland and I got my green card, I began to search on line to find what would be my next major. When “landscape design” popped up into my eyes, by instinct I knew this would be the dream job for which I was searching. I had a decent artistic background and I loved plants, and I had wanted to be a designer or an architect since I was in high school; however, my father wanted me to study biochemistry. I easily gave up and followed my parents’ advice since I did not want to offend them. My story may seem strange in the west but it is very common in my country.

Finally, in 2008 I gave up my job and went back to school to study landscape design. After two years at Tri-C and an internship with the Bremec group, I know I made the right decision. This is my dream job: I can forget day and night, eating and sleeping, even the whole world until I finish my latest project. It is such a wonderful and challenging process to transfer the request of clients into design and select beautiful plants to “draw” the picture for my clients; any hard work is worth it when I see the surprised and happy faces of my customers. In addition, just like a little child searching for seashells on the beach, the more I learn, the more surprised I feel; landscape design is not only a job, including drawing and gardening, but also the art of building a relationship between people and nature. I am happy and excited to learn and practice.

## ***What is your educational background?***

Before I went back to school, I was a research associate working on the molecular mechanism of bacterial keratitis. I have a bachelor’s degree in Biochemistry and a Ph.D in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology. I also have a master’s degree majored in Plant Physiology.

## ***What is your design Philosophy?***

My design philosophy is to help people find the harmony between nature and people. People love mountains, oceans, forests, trees and flowers because people are part of nature. As a landscape designer, my work includes not only making functional and useful outdoor spaces for people, but also helping people to enjoy the beauty of landscape and to find the bond between people and nature.

## ***Where do you receive design inspiration?***

I got my first idea to use sea wave patterns to relate to “uninterrupted style” in a design concept from “Dreampark,” which was designed by Piet Oudolf, (there is an ocean of salvia in the design), but I wanted to combine hardscape and plants by using different materials, colors and patterns. My preliminary design was based on this idea. However, when I received the secondary directive from my clients for revision, I found it was difficult to insert a swimming pool into my preliminary design. So I discussed the problem with my instructor, Michael J. Whitman, ASLA, and also a member of APLD, to redo but not revise the design. My second inspiration of the curvilinear swimming pool came from one of Mike’s designs, which had a beautiful swimming pool with turtle and fish patterns. Besides, I wanted people to touch the water, walk into the water and enjoy water fun without changing their swimming suits; so I added the walk-in wading pool and open patio with fire pit. After another semester of planting design study, when I worked on the final design, The Birth of Venus by Botticelli gave me inspiration: the theme of sea shells and sea waves. I discussed this with Mike, revised the design of the front yard, and used the sea shell pattern in hardscape and a sea wave pattern in softscape. I really appreciate the fact that Mike always encourages me, “never cease to think ‘outside of the box,’” and helps me to figure out how to turn my ideas into practicable design.

## ***What are your future career goals/plans?***

I plan to earn my associate degree in landscape design/ build and landscape contracting in the next year, then find a job as a landscape designer to practice and learn from realistic work. And I hope I can spend some more time with my daughter and my family. In an appropriate time, I may try to go back to school again to finish a degree in landscape design or landscape architecture. I hope several years of practice will help me reach this goal. To be a landscape designer or landscape architect, I hope my work will not only bring the comfortable and beautiful living environment for people, but also help people go back to Mother Nature.

# Growers Cultivating Innovation

## Innovative Growing for Innovative Design

The Novalis® grower network cultivates innovation for design and installation with our award-winning Plants that Work®—comprehensive plant solutions for all your projects. Our innovations in breeding, product mix, and regional distribution consistently deliver premium annuals, perennials, shrubs, and trees.

For information on Plants that Work® plants and programs from Novalis®, visit [www.novalis.com](http://www.novalis.com)



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## About APLD

The Association of Professional Landscape Designers is an international organization that was formed in 1989. The mission of APLD is to advance the profession of landscape design and to promote the recognition of landscape designers as qualified and dedicated professionals.

To learn more about APLD or to become a member, visit [www.apld.org](http://www.apld.org).

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