

LEAFLET

T w i x w o o d N u r s e r y

Well the general madness of Spring has subsided somewhat as we turn the corner into Summer. We've had several things happen this season that I feel are worth mentioning...

First on the list I'd like to announce that Mark Regazzi will be leaving Twixwood in another month to begin his studies in Law at DePaul in Chicago. He's worked for us since his teenage years and has worn many hats in his time with us...most recently as a member of our Sales Team. Mark has always put forth a maximum effort with a minimum of fanfare and he will truly be missed here and we wish him well with his future endeavors. Mark has been working with Tara Taylor, his successor, since late Winter/early Spring and we expect a smooth transition as she will take over Mark's duties and accounts.

I'd also like to mention that we have changed things up a bit on our website. We've given it a bit of a face-lift and have done away with things like needing a password to log in as well as some other changes to make things more user friendly. Please check us out at Twixwood.com

Getting down to business, we currently have several items that we have strong numbers on... things like: Campanula 'White Clips' & 'Blue Clips'...Echinacea 'Bright Star', Gaura 'Whirling Butterflies'...a handful of Astilbe like 'Finale', 'Vision In Pink', 'Veronica Close' & 'Red Sentenial'. Also...Echinacea 'Double Decker' & 'Orange Meadowbright' + Coreopsis 'American Dream', Aster 'Wartburg Star', Epimedium pubigerum, Hosta 'Golden Tiara' & lastly...Campanula 'Cherry Bells'. (More on general availabilities inside this newsletter) Please give us a call if your interested and we'll go over the numbers and put together an order for you!

Lastly, Summer shows... we'll be at the WI Summer Field Day at Breezy Hill Nursery in Salem, Wisconsin on August 11th...ILCA Summer Field Day on August 16th, at the Morton Arboretum in Lisle, Illinois. Last, but not least, you'll

also find us at MNLA's Summer Field Day at Christensen's in Plymouth MI on August 17th. Please stop by the booth and say hello!

-Jon Konya

ROOFTOPS – THE NEW FRONTIER in GARDEN SPACES

Rooftop gardening continues to explode in cities across the globe, creating green living space from formerly unused rooftops and cutting energy costs in the process. Though just beginning to garner greater popularity and interest in the United States, green roofs have been found on top of many European buildings for more than 30 years. In Germany, for instance, schools, office buildings, shopping centers and retail stores have planted more than 108 million square feet of green roofs. In fact, it is now estimated that 7% of all newly constructed flat roofs in Germany are green. In Japan, regulations require that new construction projects in Tokyo larger than 10,000 square feet have 20% of the roof surface area devoted to green spaces. In North America, one of the first green roofs is actually more than 70 years old. More of a garden roof than a green roof, it is located atop New York's Rockefeller Center, providing building occupants and visitors a refreshing escape into an urban oasis. Meanwhile, Chicago and other Midwest cities are today defining themselves as leaders in promoting green roofing projects. Ford Motor Company has installed green roofs on its corporate headquarters, Milwaukee has completed projects at their County Zoo and at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee's Great Lakes Water Institute, and Chicago currently has installed or is planning to install 43 roof projects.

WHAT MAKES a ROOF GREEN?

A "green" roof requires the planting or placing of vegetation on top of a facility's conventional roof. Depending on the type of green roof installed, the plants are usually drought-resistant and often require minimal attention. Although native plant

material such as ornamental grasses are often utilized, the most common type of plant grown and utilized on rooftop gardens are sedums. There are also two separate *categories* of green roof systems

- *Intensive* green roofs are similar to a roof garden, such as atop Chicago's City Hall. This type of roof requires regular maintenance, just like any garden, and is usually a public space, with trees, shrubs, and other landscaping.
- *Extensive* green roofs, similar to those found on four Chicago Target stores, are installed principally for their environmental and economic benefits. Rarely open to the public, these roofs require less soil and maintenance. In fact they tend to have limited accessibility and require only basic care.

There also are two *types* of green roofs (1) that is built right on the roof by landscapers and maintenance workers who haul the soil, plants and materials up to the top of the building; and (2) a modular system, the most popular type.

In a modular system, soil and plants are pre-planted at a nursery and placed into a series of recycled plastics. The modules are then hoisted to the top of the building: where they are installed on the roof. Studies indicate that the modular system tends to be more cost-competitive because the planting and preparation work is performed in an assembly-line fashion at the nursery. The modular system also allows the roof to be installed significantly faster than a "built in place" system, and there is less danger to landscapers working atop high buildings.

BENEFITS OF GOING GREEN

Because the green roofs are relatively new, it's too early to calculate the payback on the investment. However, some of the benefits the company is anticipating have been found on other facilities where green roofs have been installed, including reduced storm water runoff. After a storm, as much as 75% of rainwater becomes runoff. As this water washes off roofs and streets, it picks up contaminants, which can eventually make their way to rivers and lakes. Large quantities of water also stress the storm drainage

systems of many cities. A green roof can put this water to beneficial use. A report by Temple University in Philadelphia suggests that as much as 75% of the water received by a green roof is used by the plants and soils, with only about 25% released as runoff. Additionally, the runoff is released gradually, which makes it easier to control and contain.

Many facilities are also discovering that green roofs can reduce energy costs significantly. Through ongoing studies during the 2001 summer, Chicago's City hall rooftop temperatures were consistently 12 degrees less than those buildings with blacktop roofs. Surface temperatures in planted areas were as low as 86 degrees, where for a blacktop it was 168 degrees. Studies indicate that City Hall will save \$4,000 -\$5,000 per year in heating and cooling costs due to the cooling and insulating effects of the rooftop garden. In addition, they also mitigate pollution, reduce noise, create habitat for birds and other animals and even benefit mental and physical health.

OPPORTUNITIES ABOUND

The increased number of green roofing projects throughout the world is a promising sign. It indicates that we have realized the importance of replacing the green spaces lost to our rapidly urbanizing society, while fostering a healthier, more sustainable environment. Similar growth and expansion to rooftop garden installations in the residential sector is highly anticipated. Creating an entire new floor to a home, rooftop gardens will allow clients to garden, entertain, cook, sunbathe, exercise, read – or just take in the city skyline in the quiet above the city streets. This will result in significant opportunities for those contracting organizations that choose to evolve their product and service offerings to include this growing sector.

For additional information regarding rooftop gardening and/or receiving a quote for a project's plant material, please call Twixwood Nursery at 1-269-471-7408 and ask for the sales department.

Better than Gold

One of the stars of the summer flowering landscape is Rudbeckia, the Black Eyed Susan. The most common and well known variety is Rudbeckia fulgida var. sullivantii 'Goldsturm'. It was the Perennial Plant Association's Perennial Plant of the Year in 1999. 'Goldsturm' is a long-blooming, low maintenance, long-lived perennial for full sun to partial shade that adds a large splash of yellow cone flowers from mid-July thru September. It tolerates clay soils and mild droughts, but it grows best in well-drained, consistently moist soils. It performs well in areas of the country that have high heat and humidity and in areas with winter temperatures that are well below 0° F. It is not surprising that it is one of our most popular landscape perennials.

Twixwood Nursery has a Rudbeckia that is just a little better. Goldsturm has a number of poor qualities that you often do not see in its descriptions. Goldsturm is subject to a leaf blight that causes dark black spots to form on the foliage during the summer. It does not kill the plant but makes the foliage somewhat unsightly by the end of the growing season if conditions are right. Secondly, most Goldsturm is grown from seed and not from vegetative divisions of the original selection that was found in Czechoslovakia and introduced in Germany. Seed propagation of any cultivars of plants always introduces some variability in a stand of plants and this is somewhat true of Goldsturm done from seed.

We have been growing a variety of Black Eyed Susan similar to Goldsturm in characteristics and performance called, Rudbeckia neumannii 'Summer Blaze'. From our standpoint it is a better plant than Goldsturm because it appears immune to the leaf blight that despoils the foliage of Goldsturm. The foliage of Summer Blaze remains clean with no spraying in years when we fight the black spot on Goldsturm with pesticide sprays. Summer Blaze blooms just as long and as profusely in our fields as Goldsturm and is just as hardy. We do it from divisions from our fields and not from seed. For the large quantity landscapes that call for large swaths of Black Eyed Susan and require lower maintenance, Summer Blaze is an improved choice.