

2009

the magazine for success in the garden

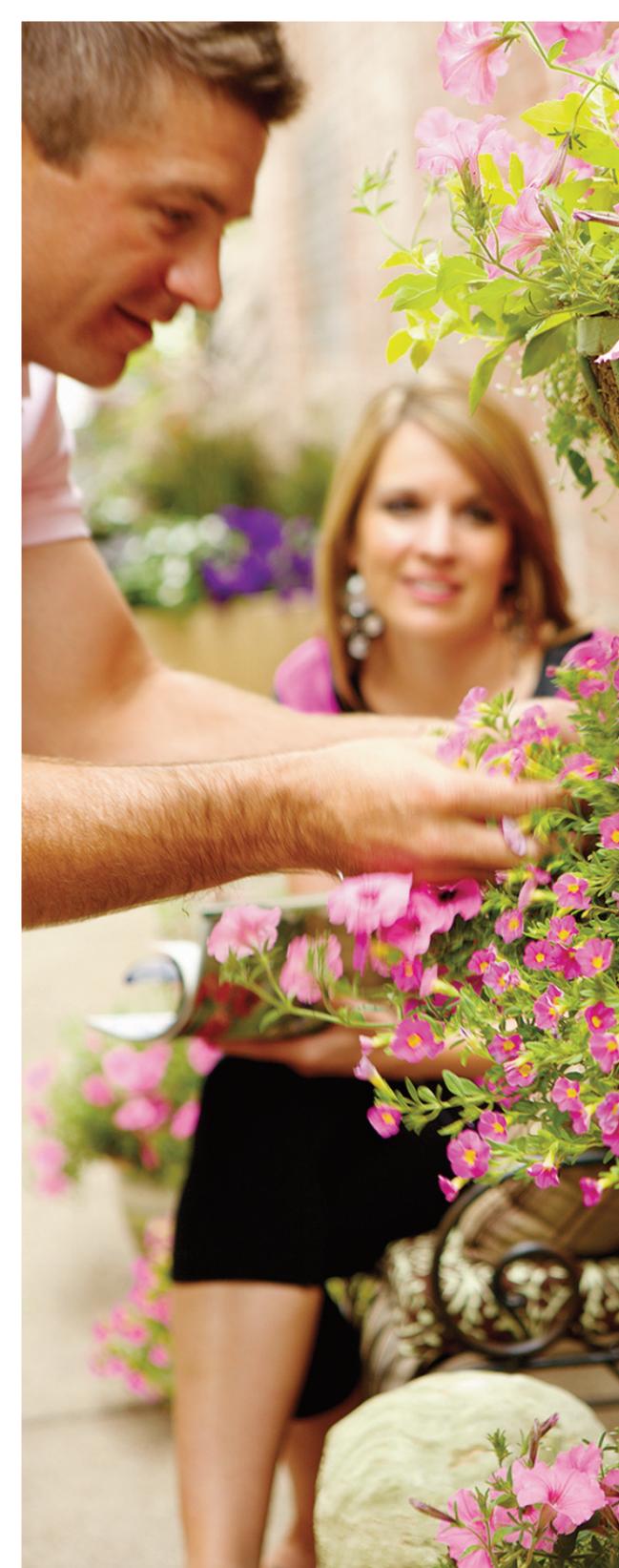
# PROVEN BEAUTY

**Q&A** with  
P. Allen Smith

Regional Growing  
Tips and Events

Host a  
**Perfect**  
Garden Party





# Contents

- page 4: **Regional To-Do List**
- page 7: **Great Garden Discoveries**
- page 8: **Top 10 Picks of 2009**  
The must-have varieties for this spring.
- page 11: **Regional Event Calendar**
- page 12: **Q & A with P. Allen Smith**  
Learn all of Allen's best watering tips.
- page 13: **P. Allen Smith's Top 25**  
Allen's go-to plants for all of his gardening and landscaping projects.
- page 14: **Combo Design Made Easy**  
Learn the secrets behind this year's featured combination, Glory Days.
- page 16: **Something to Hum About**  
Five ways to entice hummingbirds to your garden.
- page 21: **Q & A About Proper Pruning**
- page 22: **10 Ways to Say Party**  
A garden party that starts with color will end with success.
- page 25: **More Flash, Less Cash**  
Tips for stretching your garden dollars.

You can create a garden setting even when there isn't a blade of grass in sight. The brick and iron of an urban environment make a dramatic backdrop for containers filled with colorful, vigorous plants.

# Welcome to Proven Beauty

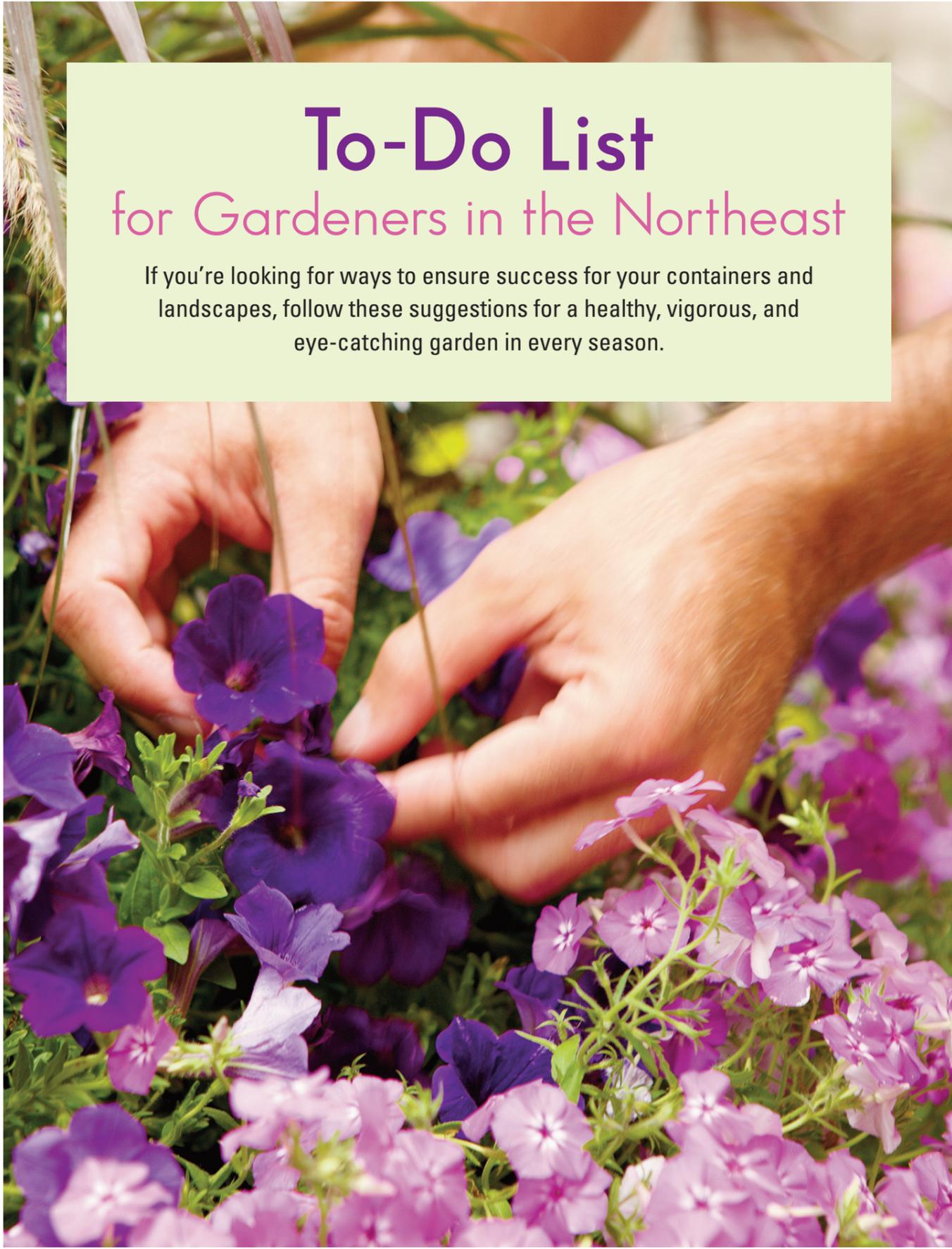
Success in the garden is easy, especially with tips, trends, and advice from the experts. And that's just what this issue of PROVEN BEAUTY brings you. From information on how and when to water and prune your plants to ideas for creating a hummingbird-friendly garden to recipes for designing beautiful containers, this issue of PROVEN BEAUTY provides practical help to make gardening easy. Whether you're a master gardener or a novice, you'll find the inspiration in these pages to create a beautiful garden that reflects your personal style. Enjoy the gardening process and the results – and enjoy this issue of PROVEN BEAUTY!

*The Proven Beauty Team*



# To-Do List for Gardeners in the Northeast

If you're looking for ways to ensure success for your containers and landscapes, follow these suggestions for a healthy, vigorous, and eye-catching garden in every season.



## spring

- ☼ When the weather allows, inspect your garden and clean up leaves, rubbish, pots and canes, or weeds that have accumulated. Remove potential hiding places for slugs and rodents.
- ☼ Remove the winter mulch of evergreen boughs as the days warm and bulb shoots start to pierce the ground.
- ☼ When late summer and fall blooming shrubs, such as Sunshine Blue® Caryopteris and Lo & Behold™ 'Blue Chip' Butterfly Bush, show ½" - 1" of new young growth, prune the stems by at least half their length or even to about 6" from the ground.
- ☼ Plant up mixed containers and hanging baskets of early-blooming annuals with hardy foliage perennials.
- ☼ After bloom time, prune the oldest stems of early-blooming shrubs to the ground to encourage young basal growth.



## summer

- ☼ Plant out tender annuals and perennials when night temperatures remain above 50° F. Group plants with similar water needs.
- ☼ Water newly installed plants deeply, and apply up to 3" of an organic mulch such as cocoa hulls or fine bark mulch to reduce surface water loss and inhibit weed growth.
- ☼ Be diligent about removing weeds before they go to seed. Toss on the compost pile.
- ☼ In times of drought, water deeply in the early morning or late afternoon. Containers may need daily watering in hot weather.
- ☼ Remove yellowed bulb foliage and early annuals after bloom time and add to the compost pile. Replant vacant spots with later-blooming varieties, such as Superbena® Verbena, Whirlwind® Scaevola, and Snowstorm® Sutera.



# great garden discoveries

## fall

- ☀️ Take cuttings of tender perennials and annuals to root and winter on a windowsill indoors.
- ☀️ Cut down spent perennials. Allow heads of sedums and ornamental grasses to remain as winter decoration and to attract birds.
- ☀️ Remove debris and leaves from beds and borders as they accumulate. Shredded leaves break down into mulch or compost quickly.
- ☀️ Remove spent annuals and tender perennials after they have become frosted and add to the compost pile.
- ☀️ Wrap evergreens prone to winter burn (e.g., Boxwoods) with burlap wound round with natural twine to prevent wind and sun burn.



SUPERBELLS® Tequila Sunrise *Calibrachoa* hybrid, COLORBLAZE™ Royal Glissade *Coleus* hybrid, and GRACEFUL GRASSES™ Toffee Twist *Carex flagellifera*

GRACEFUL GRASSES™ Toffee Twist *Carex flagellifera*, GRACEFUL GRASSES™ Purple Fountain Grass *Pennisetum setaceum* Rubrum, and GRACEFUL GRASSES™ Fiber Optic Grass *Scirpus cernuus*

## winter

- ☀️ Spray evergreen shrubs with anti-desiccant on a day that remains above 40° F.
- ☀️ After the ground has frozen, apply a loose winter mulch of evergreen boughs (recycle Christmas trees) to perennials to reduce desiccation and protect the crowns from heavy snow.
- ☀️ During the January thaw, check newly planted and shallow-rooted perennials and shrubs for signs of heaving from alternate freezing and thawing. Firm them in the ground with your heel.
- ☀️ Dislodge snow from dwarf evergreens by hitting the branches from below with a heavy stick or broom.
- ☀️ Take stock of your garden. Plan and send in orders for new plants and seeds for the coming season.



If you're looking for something new and distinctive to add to your garden, check out the foliage finds we've unearthed. The ColorBlaze™ Coleus and Graceful Grasses™ collections are two new introductions from Proven Winners. These exceptional performers are easy to grow and add interesting color, texture, and height to landscapes and containers whether by themselves or in combination with flowering varieties.



COLORBLAZE™ Dipt in Wine *Coleus* hybrid

COLORBLAZE™ Royal Glissade™ *Coleus* hybrid

# Top Picks for 2009

10 Great New Plants to Set Your Garden Apart



## Daredevil™ Geraniums

This new line of zonal geraniums in a range of reds, pinks, and white (seven in all) boasts superior heat tolerance on upright plants to 24" tall. Mostly treated as annuals, they are ideal in sunny gardens or as "thrillers" in containers. Once established, the Daredevil series tolerates drought readily and even a touch of early frost.

## Luscious™ Citrus Blend™ Lantana

produces plenty of exciting flower clusters all season long. Individual flowers range from brilliant red, flame, and paprika to clear yellow in an amazing array of tropical colors that attract nectar-searching butterflies and hummingbirds. This plant is treated as an annual.



## 'Tuscan Sun' Heliopsis

This compact (18"-30") cultivar of our native perennial False Sunflower is ideal for containers or for the front or middle of the border in Zones 3-9. It's brilliant but not brassy yellow daisy-like blooms shine from mid summer on.

## Oso Easy™ Strawberry Crush Rose

is the latest addition to the Oso Easy™ line of carefree, long-blooming shrub roses for Zone 5 and warmer. Trademark of the series, the glossy dark green foliage, is highly disease resistant and is the perfect foilage for the double strawberry turning creamy-pink flowers of 'Strawberry Crush.' It is "oh so easy" to grow in most sunny gardens.



## Let's Dance™ Hydrangeas

bloom and rebloom reliably even in Zone 5 because they produce flower clusters on both new and old wood. Let's Dance™ Starlight is a lacecap form with heads of bright pink (blue in acid soils), flowers that age green, and vibrant green foliage. Mophead Let's Dance™ Moonlight has rich pink (or blue) flowers that age to green. Both these new shrubs reach 2' to 3' tall.



### Supertunia® Vista Silverberry

is the perfect annual for filling large areas. This vigorous, self-cleaning Petunia in soft pink grows about 2' tall but may spread to 4' across by the end of the season, easily covering those areas left vacant by spring blooming bulbs or summer dormant Oriental poppies.

### Sugar Tip™ Hibiscus

sparkles with variegated cream-edged, blue-green foliage even when not in bloom. Its double sugary pink flowers look charmingly old-fashioned and begin to bloom on 10-foot tall shrubs in midsummer continuing into fall. Zone 5.



### Laguna™ Heavenly Lilac Lobelia

This annual pale lilac trailing Lobelia defies the heat and humidity of summer, and the self-cleaning flowers bloom until frost. Its well-branched, cascading habit makes it superb for hanging baskets and other containers, and at 8" to 10" tall, it also serves well at the front of sunny beds and borders.



### Catalina® Gilded Grape Torenia

is one of a handful of annuals that tolerates shady locations as well as summer heat. All season long the sunny yellow blooms of this wishbone flower, accented with deep purple centers, bloom on 16-inch mounds. They are seldom browsed by deer but are often visited by hummingbirds.



### Lo & Behold™ 'Blue Chip' Buddleia

is less than 24" tall and just doesn't know when to stop blooming. From July onward in Zone 5, 'Blue Chip' continues to produce its mini spikes of lightly fragrant lavender blue flowers that attract butterflies like a magnet.



Not sure what zone you're in?  
Click here to find out.

## Top Ten Northeast Gardening Events

Mark your calendar, grab friends, and hit the road for "must-go" gardening events. Stroll through flowers for fresh, innovative green ideas to enhance your living space in 2009.

### Outdoor Living: An All-Day Seminar with P. Allen Smith and Proven Winners

Foxboro, Massachusetts  
April 25, 2009  
[www.provenwinners.com/ce\\_main.cfm?pwMainPage](http://www.provenwinners.com/ce_main.cfm?pwMainPage)

Check out this day of information and inspiration from experts to help you create gardens and containers that will be the envy of the neighborhood.

### A Garden to Die For: Wicked Plants at Brooklyn Botanic Garden

Brooklyn, New York  
May 30 – September 6, 2009  
[www.bbg.org](http://www.bbg.org)

BBG will enter the dark side – of plant life, that is. Visitors will encounter species that may poison, kill, and otherwise destroy, as well as those that heal and salve.

### Common Ground Country Fair – Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association

Unity, Maine  
September 23-25, 2009  
[www.mofga.org/TheFair/tabid/135/Default.aspx](http://www.mofga.org/TheFair/tabid/135/Default.aspx)

MOFGA holds a celebration of rural, sustainable living, with information on composting and recycling, herbs, and an exhibition hall. Children's area includes magic, puppets, music, arts and crafts, and its own demonstration area.

### Rochester Lilac Festival

Rochester, New York  
May 8-17, 2009  
[www.lilacfestival.com](http://www.lilacfestival.com)

The "Flower City" of Rochester celebrates spring with its 22 acres of lilacs in Highland Park. Join the gathering of lilac lovers and enjoy music and exhibits of all sorts, too.

### Rose Weekend, Elizabeth Park

Hartford, Connecticut  
June 19-21, 2009  
[www.elizabethpark.org](http://www.elizabethpark.org)

Visit the nation's oldest municipal rose garden at its peak. Along with the Heritage and other permanent gardens, you will see one of the nation's All-America rose test gardens.

### Kiku in the Japanese Autumn Garden

The New York Botanical Garden, Bronx, New York  
October 17–November 15, 2009  
[www.NYBG.org](http://www.NYBG.org)

The courtyards of the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory will again be ablaze with autumn's finest colors in homage to the significance of plants in Japan. This breath-taking display is not to be missed.

### Northern New England Home Garden Flower Show

Fryeburg, Maine  
May 15-17, 2009  
[www.homegardenflowershow.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=Fryeburg.home](http://www.homegardenflowershow.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=Fryeburg.home)

Welcome spring at the Fryeburg Fairgrounds for the All Things Growing seminars and garden market, along with talks on energy-efficient home fixes.

### Newport Flower Show, Rosecliff

Newport, Rhode Island  
June 26-28, 2009  
[www.newportmansions.org/page11511.cfm](http://www.newportmansions.org/page11511.cfm)

This spectacular flower show, set in the house and grounds of Rosecliff, includes floral arrangement displays and horticultural and garden exhibits.

### P. Allen Smith Day, Pleasant View Gardens

Loudon, New Hampshire  
August 6, 2009  
[www.pwvpg.com/calendar/](http://www.pwvpg.com/calendar/)

Enjoy a day touring the grounds of Pleasant View and getting information on the latest tips, trends, and plants from gardening professionals, including P. Allen Smith.

### Longwood Gardens Chrysanthemum Festival

Kennett Square, Pennsylvania  
Mid-October to November 22, 2009  
[www.longwoodgardens.org](http://www.longwoodgardens.org)

The conservatory at Longwood Gardens is never more spectacular than during the 20,000-plus chrysanthemum extravaganza in all shapes and colors. At the same time, the grounds explode in full fall dress.

# Q & A

with P. Allen Smith



**Q:** What rules do you recommend for watering plants?

**A:** The most important thing to remember about watering plants is simply: "Do it!" Since you've already invested both time and money in your garden plants, keep them growing by following a few basic guidelines.

- 1. Make it part of your routine.** With our busy lifestyles, it's easy to forget to water. Since some plants require daily watering while others weekly, it's important to get them on your schedule.
- 2. Water early.** The best time to water the garden is during the morning, as this will minimize evaporation. Watering at night may promote disease.
- 3. Water thoroughly.** Soak the soil so the water reaches the root zone. Light watering encourages the plant roots to grow near the surface of the soil, making plants more susceptible to drought. But don't overwater. Most plants' roots will die if they sit in soggy soil.
- 4. Test for soil moisture.** Place your finger into the soil and feel for the moisture level. For established plants, if the first four inches of soil is dry, watering is needed. For new or recently transplanted plants, water them when the first two inches of the soil is dry.
- 5. Know your plant's needs.** Annuals may need to be watered more frequently than perennials or shrubs as their root systems aren't usually as developed or deep. All new plants need to be watered about once a week (if it doesn't rain) for at least a year until the root system can become established. Containers, window boxes, and hanging baskets need to be watered frequently, often daily, particularly if they are in full sun locations. And even plants labeled "drought tolerant" must be watered occasionally.
- 6. Mulch your plants.** A three-inch layer of mulch will act like a protective coating over the ground, holding in moisture longer so you won't need to water as often.



ANGELFACE® Blue Angelonia



SUPERBELLS® Plum Calibrachoa



SUPERBELLS® Red Calibrachoa



SUPERBELLS® Yellow Chiffon Calibrachoa



SEÑORITA™ Rosalita Cleome hybrid



COLORBLAZE™ 'SEDONA' Coleus hybrid



TOTALLY TEMPTED™ Cuphea llavea



DIAMOND FROST® Euphorbia



DOLCE® Key Lime Pie Heuchera



ROCKAPULCO™ series Impatiens



LUSCIOUS™ CITRUS BLEND™ Lantana hybrid



BROADWAY LIGHTS™ Leucanthemum



LAGUNA™ Sky Blue Lobelia



SNOW PRINCESS™ Lobularia hybrid



Opal INNOCENCE® Nemesia



Lemon SYMPHONY Osteospermum



CHARMED® Wine Oxalis



SUPERTUNIA® Bordeaux Petunia



SUPERTUNIA® Royal Velvet Petunia



SUPERTUNIA® Vista Bubblegum Petunia



NEW WONDER® Scaevola



SNOWSTORM® GIANT SNOWFLAKE® Sutura



LO & BEHOLD™ Blue Chip Buddleia



SUNSHINE BLUE® Caryopteris



PINKY WINKY™ Hydrangea

P. Allen Smith's

# TOP 25 PICKS

# combo design made easy

You can create this *glory days* combination for your porch or patio by following this simple five-step design recipe.

**step 1:** Find an area in your outdoor space that receives plenty of sun and choose a container that fits the look of that space. Be sure your container has drainage holes or drill them yourself.

**step 2:** Plant Diamond Frost® Euphorbia, Supertunia® Royal Velvet Petunia, and Superbena® Large Lilac Blue Verbena in the container according to the diagram shown here, using 4.5" plants.

**step 3:** Fill the container with premium potting soil, but leave 2 to 3 inches of room so that water will penetrate the roots rather than run off the top of the container.

**step 4:** Water only when the top of the soil is dry, but remember that containers will require more frequent watering than landscapes. Soak until water drains from holes. Containers benefit from weekly waterings with a food high in nitrogen, phosphorous, potassium, and iron such as Proven Winners® Premium Plant Food. In addition, apply a continuous-release fertilizer once a season.

**step 5:** Don't be afraid to prune the plants. When they start to look overgrown, give them a good trimming. They may look like they got a haircut for a week or two, but they will come back even more beautiful and vigorous.

## Glory Days

- 1 DIAMOND FROST® Euphorbia hybrid
- 2 SUPERTUNIA® Royal Velvet Petunia hybrid
- 3 SUPERBENA® Large Lilac Blue Verbena hybrid



## NO WORK. ALL PLAY.



**Glory Days**  
DIAMOND FROST® Euphorbia hybrid  
SUPERTUNIA® Royal Velvet Petunia hybrid  
SUPERBENA® Large Lilac Blue Verbena hybrid

Creating a beautiful setting is simple when you choose plants from Proven Winners. With combinations like *Glory Days* and inspiration from our *Gardener's Idea Book*, it couldn't be easier to design an outdoor living space that reflects your sense of style.

Order your **FREE** 28-page *Gardener's Idea Book* by visiting [www.provenwinners.com/idea105](http://www.provenwinners.com/idea105) or by contacting us at 1-877-865-5818.



We Plant Ideas.

Proven Winners – The #1 Plant Brand™ – is available across the country at independent garden centers and The Home Depot.



Story by Megan McConnell Hughes

# Something to Hum About



Enticing hummingbirds to your garden, patio, or balcony is as easy as planting a riot of color.

You'll do a double take the first time you spy one. Feathered packages of energy, hummingbirds are tiny and virtually silent, but they're prized garden jewels. Amid a blur of beating wings they float from flower to flower noshing on nectar and feeding on insects. Beckon a host of hummers to your garden with these quick tips.

**Go red.** Hummingbirds fall fast for the color red. The brilliant hue is more visible to them than many other colors. Bright pink and orange are also favorites and act as hummingbird-calling-cards in your garden. Plant clusters of flowers sporting these bold, bright hues in the garden or containers.

**Plant a nonstop show.** Make your patio or yard a hummingbird habitat from spring through fall by planting a nonstop nectar-smorgasbord. Early-blooming perennials, such as Pagoda™ Rose & Ivory Hybrid Columbine (*Aquilegia hybrida*), provide a sumptuous meal in spring. Follow the spring show with summer-blooming and fall-blooming beauties. While the hummers drink in the delicious delicacies, you'll revel in the months-long parade of posies.

Space does not limit your potential to play host to hummingbirds. They're just as apt to visit a nectar-filled container garden as they are a roving perennial patch. Condo dwellers rejoice!

**Say no to pesticides.** Pesticides and hummingbirds don't mix. Sipping nectar from plants that have been sprayed with pesticide can sicken and kill birds. Plus, pesticides kill the insects hummers need for protein.

**Provide some H2O.** Hummingbirds love to splash. A shallow birdbath – no deeper than 1/2 inch – is all hummers need. If you already have a deeper birdbath, make it shallower by scattering rocks on the bottom.

**Invite birds to rest.** Hummingbirds are a whirl of activity when they are gathering nectar. Provide plenty of perches for them to rest their wings in anticipation of their next flight. Hummers spend 80 percent of their time perching on plant stems, twigs, or in bushes. Small woody shrubs, such as Lo & Behold™ 'Blue Chip' Butterfly Bush and Wine & Roses® Weigela, make great hummingbird perches.



SUMMER WAVE® Blue *Torenia* hybrid

DOLCE® Mocha Mint *Heuchera hybrid*

## Hummingbird Buffet



These plants are among a hummingbird's favorites.

### Annuals

- Artist® *Ageratum hybrid*
- Superbells® *Calibrachoa hybrid*
- Spirit™ Spider Flower (*Cleome hassleriana*)
- Totally Tempted™ *Cuphea (Cuphea llavea)*
- Luscious™ *Lantana (Lantana hybrid)*
- Laguna™ *Lobelia (Lobelia hybrid)*
- Supertunia® *Petunia (Petunia hybrid)*
- Catalina® *Torenia (Torenia hybrid)*
- Summer Wave® *Torenia (Torenia hybrid)*

### Perennials

- Pagoda™ *Columbine (Aquilegia hybrida)*
  - Dolce® Coral Bell (*Heuchera hybrid*)
  - Garnet Brocade™ *Sedum (Hylotelphium hybrid)*
- ### Shrubs
- Bronze Anniversary™ *Abelia (Abelia x grandiflora)*
  - Chiffon™ *Rose of Sharon (Hibiscus syriacus)*
  - Lo & Behold™ 'Blue Chip' *Buddleia (Buddleia hybrid)*
  - Bloomerang™ *Purple Lilac (Syringa hybrid)*
  - Wine & Roses® *Weigela (Weigela florida)*



### Megan McConnell Hughes

Megan gardens, writes, and chases her 2-year-old all over the Iowa farm she and her husband call home. Megan has a horticulture degree from Iowa State University and is a freelance writer for several publications including *Better Homes and Gardens*, *Country Gardens*, *Midwest Living*, and *Organic Gardening*.

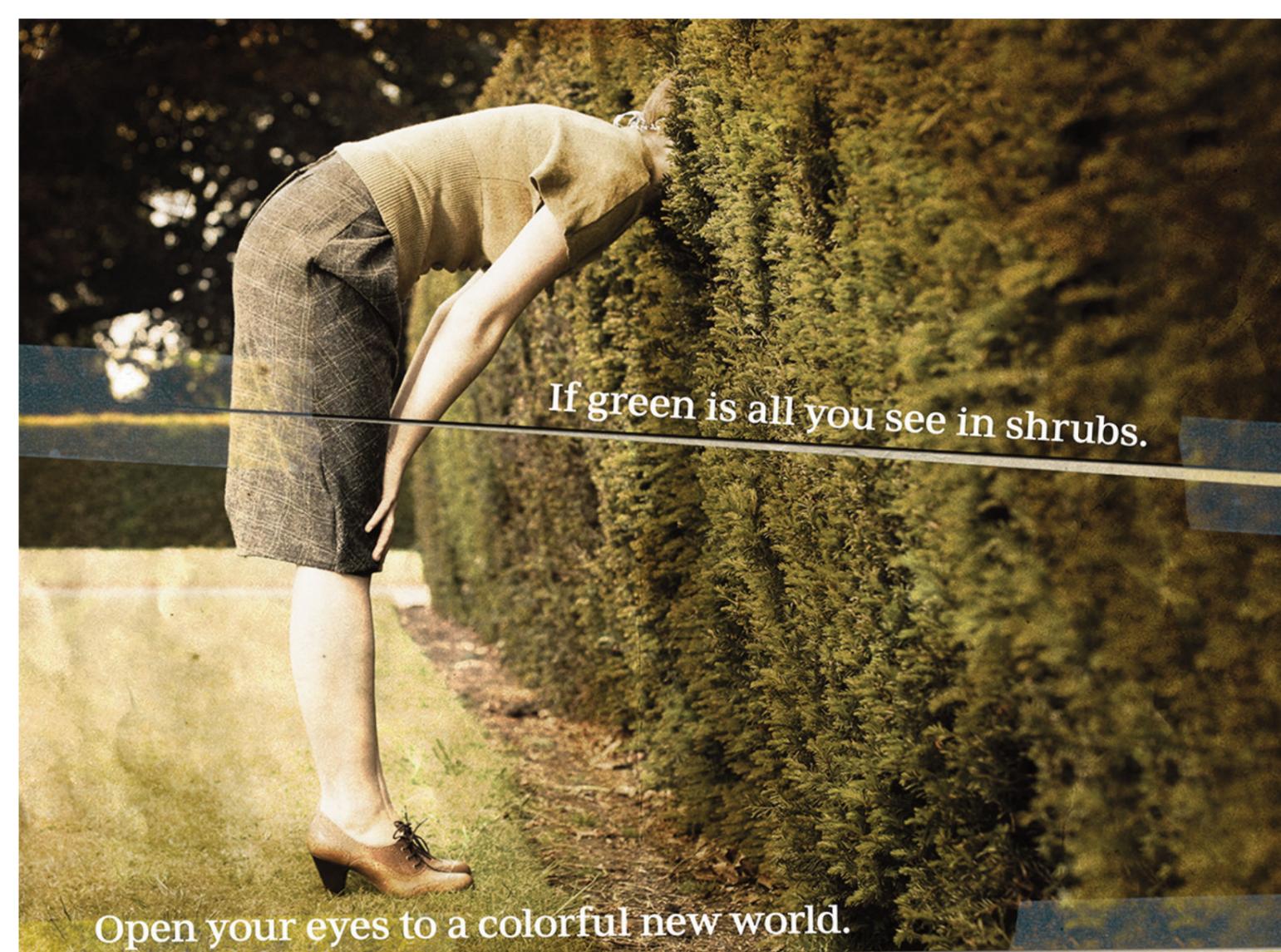
# NO WATER WOES



\$29.99 plus S&H

Responsible gardening means watering wisely, and the WaterWise™ system helps you conserve water and easily manage your watering tasks. One WaterWise Kit contains everything you need to water up to 10 containers or 30 feet of landscape by just turning on your faucet. You can purchase the WaterWise kit online at [www.provenwinners.com](http://www.provenwinners.com) or call us at 877-865-5818 to order.





Open your eyes to a colorful new world.



Lo & Behold™ Blue Chip

Wine & Roses™

Pinky Winky™

Oso Easy™ Paprika

Limelight

If you've never considered shrubs a brilliant garden option, consider this: ColorChoice® flowering shrubs are a new generation – bred and selected by expert horticulturists to give you lots of color without all the work. They bear the Proven Winners® seal by meeting rigorous standards for color, health, hardiness and ease of care. A colorful yard can be easy. Just look for the white



Proven Winners pot at better garden centers. Visit [www.provenwinners.com](http://www.provenwinners.com) to learn more.



# Q & A

## on proper pruning



**Q:** How often should I prune my shrubs?

**A:** Most shrubs need only one significant pruning session a year, and many don't even need that. Pruning common shrubs like Lilacs, Forsythia and Burning Bush into tight mounds is not only unnecessary but isn't that great for the plants, either. Frequent shearing encourages surface branching, possibly resulting in an unhealthy structure and reduced flowering. If you really want a tightly sheared look in your garden, choose a plant that is suited to it, such as Boxwood.

**Q:** When should I prune flowering shrubs?

**A:** Prune spring flowering shrubs after flowering. Plants that bloom in early spring usually produce their flower buds the year before. If you prune these spring bloomers in fall or winter you'll remove the flower buds and won't have flowers that year. Summer flowering shrubs, on the other hand, should be pruned in late winter or early spring for optimum flower growth. Don't be afraid to cut fast-growing plants, such as Lo & Behold™ 'Blue Chip' Buddleia or Petit Bleu™ Caryopteris, down to as little as 10-12" tall.

**Q:** What about Hydrangeas?

**A:** Hydrangeas are unique. You'll need to identify your specific Hydrangea and follow the appropriate rule. Hydrangea macrophylla, like the Cityline™ series, bloom on old wood. The little pruning they need should be done immediately after flowering. Hydrangea paniculata, like 'Limelight' and Pinky Winky™, bloom on new wood. They'll produce better flowers if cut back in late winter.

**Q:** What about stray or broken branches?

**A:** These can be trimmed back at any time.

For more information on pruning basics, visit [www.provenwinners.com](http://www.provenwinners.com).

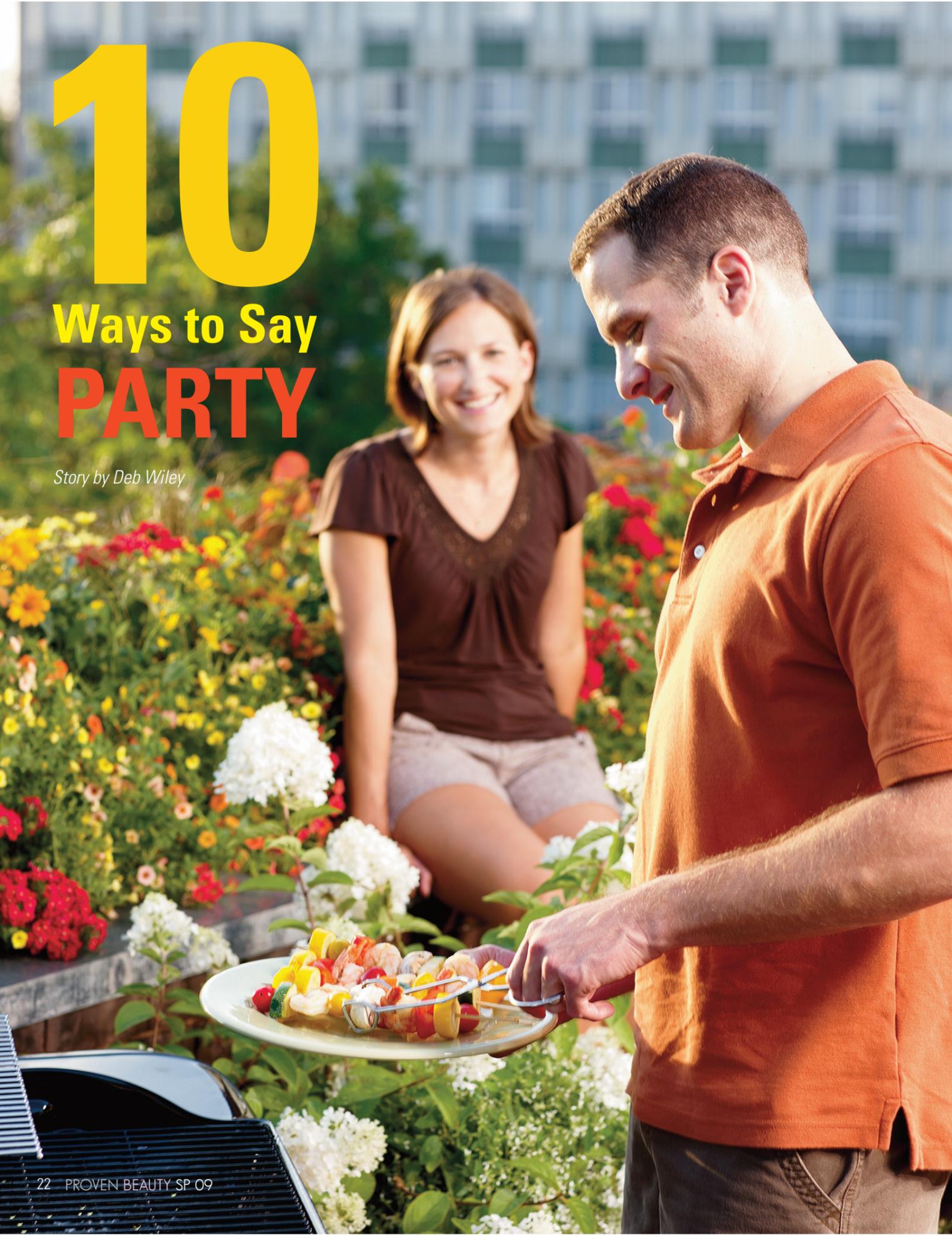


**Jane Beggs-Joles** has pruning shears and isn't afraid to use them. With a bachelor's degree in horticulture and a master's in agricultural economics, both from Michigan State University, Jane has worked in ornamental horticulture since college. She is a marketing specialist at Spring Meadow Nursery, the propagator for Proven Winners® ColorChoice® Flowering Shrubs.

# 10

## Ways to Say PARTY

Story by Deb Wiley



### 1 Set the table.

Choose a color theme, then coordinate with a luscious pot of blooming flowers as a centerpiece. For a sparkling summer evening look, go all white with your tablecloth, napkins, dishes, and flowers such as airy Diamond Frost® Euphorbia.

### 2 Assemble a buffet.

For larger groups, serve a casual buffet on long picnic tables covered with colorful beach towels. Place flatware in a child's beach pail and wash new plastic children's sand shovels to use as serving pieces. For a playful centerpiece, stuff a giant straw summer hat with disposable cameras, sunscreen, and sunglasses.

### 3 Manicure your yard.

For a no-cost improvement that yields big results, mow your lawn, remove spent flowers, and tidy up. Hide any bare spots with masses of flowers – Laguna™ Lobelia is a great filler choice for sunny spots and Rockapulco® Impatiens will brighten your shaded areas. You can leave them in their nursery pots for the party and plant later.



### 4 Scrub your grill rack.

Remove old cooked-on meat and carbon to prevent sticking. A clean grill also means no left-over flavors from last time.

### 5 Serve simple eats.

Make-ahead foods, such as skewers with veggies and meats, corn on the cob, and a simple tossed salad, allow you to spend time chatting with guests. To keep lettuce fresh, nest the bowl in a larger container of ice.

### 6 Light up the night.

Suspend lanterns or strings of white Christmas lights from trees or porch eaves. Citronella candles and tiki torches repel bugs and cast a warm glow.



▲ Simplicity is at the heart of a successful garden party. Choose a menu that is easy to prepare and decorate with plants that are easy to maintain.

## 7 Ice the beverages.

A wheelbarrow makes an ideal mobile cooler. Just fill with ice, load with bottles and cans of your favorite drinks, and roll.

## 8 Make your own hedge.

On a patio or rooftop garden, group large potted plants, such as 'Limelight' Hydrangeas, near the table for a cozy atmosphere. Or move your table right into the garden, next to blooming plants. Getting away from the deck or patio creates a new and intimate feeling.

## 9 Plan for rain or sun.

A large umbrella over the table shields guests from late-evening sun. If a sudden rainstorm brews up, plan to duck into a tent or porch.

## 10 Send them away happy.

As a living reminder of a good time, tuck extra 3-inch pots of the same flowers that match your centerpiece into inexpensive clay pots bedecked with raffia or twine to hand out as party favors. Group them on a side table to serve as decorations until guests depart.

Visit [www.provenwinners.com/combinations/](http://www.provenwinners.com/combinations/) for hundreds of recipes you can use to design beautiful flowering containers to grace your party table, deck, or porch.



**Deb Wiley** is an award-winning writer who blogs at [www.plantingqueen.com](http://www.plantingqueen.com) and gardens in Des Moines, Iowa. She was the garden editor at *Midwest Living* magazine for more than a decade and has written for other garden magazines including *Country Gardens*, *Landscape Solutions* and *Garden Ideas & Outdoor Living*. She also serves on the board of the Friends of the Des Moines Botanical Garden and is a certified master gardener.



▲ Beautiful plants create a relaxing atmosphere for the casual elegance of a garden party.



# More Flash, Less Cash

## Tips for Stretching Your Garden Dollars

Story by Ruth Rogers Clausen

Nothing lifts the spirit more than a beautiful garden, but with money so tight how can you create a colorful, lush outdoor living space that will fit your budget? A little ingenuity and some eco-friendly thinking can help stretch your garden dollars.

Water is a major but essential expense, so select plants that have lower water needs, such as Diamond Frost® Euphorbia, Intensia® Phlox, and Soprano®

Osteospermum. Group together water guzzlers for easy maintenance and minimum water waste. Install water barrels to collect rain, and plant a rain garden at the base of downspouts. Plant Dogwoods, such as Arctic Fire™ and Arctic Sun™, and other plants with moisture-loving roots to help slow soil-eroding runoff and reduce flooding. Recycle kitchen waste (coffee grounds, potato peelings, etc.) and garden waste (shredded

leaves, weeds, etc.) on a compost pile. Consider an efficient, easy watering system, like WaterWise®, which can help you conserve water and manage the watering of multiple containers or large landscapes. Apply a summer mulch of finished compost to reduce water loss and gradually improve soil structure and its water-holding capacity. In intensely dry, hot regions, use a gravel or pebble mulch to moderate soil temperatures and water loss. In northern areas, try a winter mulch of discarded Christmas trees to help insulate perennials and groundcovers.

*“Selecting vigorous, top-performing plants increases the bang for your buck.”*

Selecting vigorous, top-performing plants increases the bang for your buck. Extra long-blooming Rockapulco® Impatiens and Totally Tempted™ Cuphea, for example, are annuals that always look fresh and need no replacing halfway through the season, making them a great value. Choosing perennials and shrubs also means you have plants you can rely on year after year to grace your garden. Perennials with evergreen or colorful foliage, such as Pink Chablis® Lamium and the Dolce® Heuchera hybrids, are striking year round, in bloom or not, and shrubs like gilt-edged Golden Anniversary™ Abelia and purple-leaved Summer Wine® Dwarf Ninebark have the kind of exceptional foliage that enlivens mixed borders. Grown in containers when young, these shrubs transplant readily to the garden in fall.



Whirlwind® Blue and White *Scaevola aemula*

You can also make those garden dollars go farther by reducing the number of plants required. For instance, choose vigorous wide-spreading plants like Supertunia® Vista Petunia, which can cover two or more square feet quickly, or other great landscape growers, such as Whirlwind® Scaevola, Flambe® Chrysocephalum, and Luscious™ Lantana. These plants are invaluable for filling spots between shrubs and perennials vacated by earlier-blooming daffodils and tulips.

*Your garden can be beautiful and affordable too when you think creatively and choose wisely.*



Lemon Symphony  
*Osteospermum hybrid*

*Use less water with an Osteospermum.*



Totally Tempted™  
*Cuphea Ilavea*

*Long-lasting Cuphea is a great value.*



Dolce® Key Lime Pie  
*Heuchera hybrid*

*Try perennials with color like this Heuchera.*



Supertunia® Vista Bubblegum,  
Fuchsia, and Silverberry  
*Petunia hybrids*

*Supertunia Vistas give you more flowers for less.*



**Ruth Rogers Clausen** gardens in Westchester County, New York (Zone 6), where she grows an eclectic range of annuals, perennials, and shrubs in containers and in the ground. Her recommendations reflect those plants that do well throughout the Northeast. She has been published in several Hearst magazines, *Better Homes and Gardens* Special Interest Publications, *Fine Gardening*, and *Horticulture* magazines.



## Proven Beauty -

a new online magazine with great tips for gardeners at any level.

[DON'T MISS AN ISSUE!](#)

## We Value Your Opinion

Our goal is for *Proven Beauty* to be your eco-friendly digital magazine for information and inspiration in the garden.

Please click on our survey link below to help us serve you better.

[TAKE THE SURVEY](#)

For a list of retailers who sell varieties in this magazine -

[CLICK HERE](#)

For patent and trademark information -

[CLICK HERE](#)