



# Growing Wise

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION ■ Spring 2011 Issue

**Kanavas Landscape Management, Inc. ■ 262.786.0050**

We have managed to survive yet another Wisconsin winter... And soon color will return to our landscapes. The crocuses and daffodils will soon be blooming, song birds singing, and nature will once againre-bloom into the colorful palette we have been waiting for!



## *Special Events for 2011*

We would welcome the opportunity to meet many of you at one of our Kanavas Landscape Management special events this coming season. This past January (yes, January) dozens of hearty gardeners gathered at Boerner Botanical Garden for the first in a series of 4 garden walks with Milwaukee's own horticulture expert Melinda Myers. On "Winter Wonderland" garden walk we looked at the winter beauty in our landscapes provided by bark, form and winter fruit of trees and shrubs as well as seed heads of perennials and ornamental grasses. The future dates of the remaining walks include May 18<sup>th</sup> - "Spring Sensations", July 13<sup>th</sup> - "Summer Blooms, Birds & Butterflies", and the October 15<sup>th</sup> walk highlighting "Autumn's Brilliance". Call 414.525.5659 for more information.

In addition KLM sponsored Ms. Myers for a lecture at the Milwaukee Art Museum's "Art In Bloom" event on March 31<sup>st</sup>.

Look for Kanavas and Melinda at 2 of our area's finest Garden Tours. On Saturday July 9<sup>th</sup> join us in Wauwatosa for the "Secret garden's of Wauwatosa" tour - where homeowners

showcase their original, creative landscapes. This is a perfect opportunity to see what annuals, perennials and shrubs flourish in our challenging Wisconsin climate. July 30<sup>th</sup> is the date for the "Ten Garden's of Shorewood" tour.

Melinda is available at both tours for a very informal question & answer session - and be sure to enjoy your complimentary KLM private-label water to keep you hydrated while walking! Visit [www.kanavaslandscape.com](http://www.kanavaslandscape.com) for additional information. Click on the 'special events' link.

PROUD SPONSOR

**Boerner Through the Seasons**  
2011 Garden Walks with Melinda Myers

Winter Wonderland  
Spring Sensations  
Summer Blooms, Birds & Butterflies  
Autumn's Brilliance



CLICK HERE  
FOR MORE INFORMATION

*Growing Wise* is written and compiled by Mike Kreuser with the assistance of Donna Kuehl. Contributing writers are as noted. Thank you for your interest...and your feedback is appreciated!!

2011 - Perennial of the Year

## *Amsonia hubrichtii* Blue Star Flower

The 2011 Perennial Plant Association selection grows 42" tall and 36" wide in a mounded form. Very hardy in zone 4, it is a versatile (Eastern) North American native.

Features of this plant are throughout the season - from late spring to early summer. Two to three inch wide clusters of small, light blue, star shaped flowers are formed above the ferny



foliage. The leaves are a bright green in spring and summer, but turn a bright golden-yellow color in fall.

Performs best in full sun to partial shade, and once established can tolerate drier conditions. Use as a border, cottage gardens - and best when massed. Very attractive when mixed with ornamental grasses that have attractive seed heads.

**Plant this great perennial in 2011!**

## *Ireland's Green*

by John Ireland

Q & A from our Lawn Care Manager

*When is the best time to seed my lawn?*

Early Autumn is the best time to seed because this provides the young grass plant with enough time to develop and mature before it has to deal with the heat and stress of our summer season. Seeding can be successful in Spring, but extra care needs to be provided to get the plant through summer - frequent watering can be critical!

*Can I seed after pre-emergent crabgrass control has been applied to my lawn?*

Yes - but extra effort needs to be taken to physically break the barrier that has been set up to prevent crabgrass germination. Areas to be seeded need to be heavily watered prior to soil preparation. After soil has dried out - break it up, turning over the top 4-6". This ensures the crabgrass barrier has been broken and the desirable seed you are planting will germinate.

*Thank you for letting Kanavas  
make YOUR lawn OUR lawn.*

*" I love Spring  
anywhere ~*

*But if I  
could  
choose, I*



*would always greet it  
in a Garden"*

-Ruth Stout

## *Spring Forward In The Garden*

Although recent weather may have delayed some of your planting plans, it's time to spring into action for 2011!. Most gardeners will find there are many chores to finish up from fall and winter.

If you applied winter protective mulch to plants such as roses and recently planted perennials, be sure to pull that mulch back away from the plants as they emerge. Carefully remove protective cones or soil mounds from roses. Tree wrap and plastic bark protectors that were applied in fall to young, thin-barked trees should also be removed now to avoid injuring the bark from overheating.

One of the best features of ornamental grasses is their graceful texture and rustling sound throughout the winter. But the old dead stems need to be cut back close to the ground, making way for the new crop of green foliage. Other herbaceous perennials may also need to have last years dead stems removed if it wasn't completed last fall.



Some woody flowering shrubs actually perform better if they are cut back as if they were herbaceous plants, at least in our area of the Midwest. It may seem drastic, but the reason is that they produce their flower buds on current season's growth. This type of pruning can be done any time during the dormant season, but is best accomplished

before the new growth begins. Cut the plants all the way back to a few inches above the ground, making sure there are several plump healthy buds on the remain stems. Butterfly bush (Buddleia), bluebeard (Caryopteris), Russian sage (Perovskia), and late-flowering Spirea should be pruned in this manner.

Dead foliage can be composted for recycling back to the soil later. Shredding or chipping the material first will help it break down more quickly. Regarding compost, do not forget to give the contents of your compost pile a few turns this spring, especially if its been sitting still all winter. The center of good-sized pile should be quite warm, due to heat generated while organic material is decomposing. A pitchfork and/or shovel should be used to pull the finished compost out of the center of the pile and push outer, intact material into the center.

Shredded or chipped woody stems can also be used as mulch for weed control and moisture retention. Spring is a good time to add or replenish mulch around trees, shrubs and perennial beds, but be careful not to bury soon-to-emerge herbaceous perennials too deeply.

### **Professional Maintenance can be Affordable!**

**KLM will customize a maintenance program to fit your specific needs and budget!**

- ✓Spring Clean Up
- ✓Lawn Care Program
- ✓Seasonal Pruning
- ✓Hardwood Mulch Installation
- ✓Monthly Bed Maintenance
- ✓Fall Cut Backs and Clean Up

*Contact one of our sales representatives for a no-cost proposal!*

262.786.0050

## Get Spring Color Earlier

There are several plants that will survive temperatures down to about 25-28 degrees F. As a result, when night temperatures will no longer fall below that threshold, it is safe to plant violas, pansies, dianthus, calendulas, snapdragons and some primula and alyssum varieties. You can plant directly into the ground if it is not too wet. Test the soil by squeezing a handful... if it doesn't clump up, it is safe to work the soil.

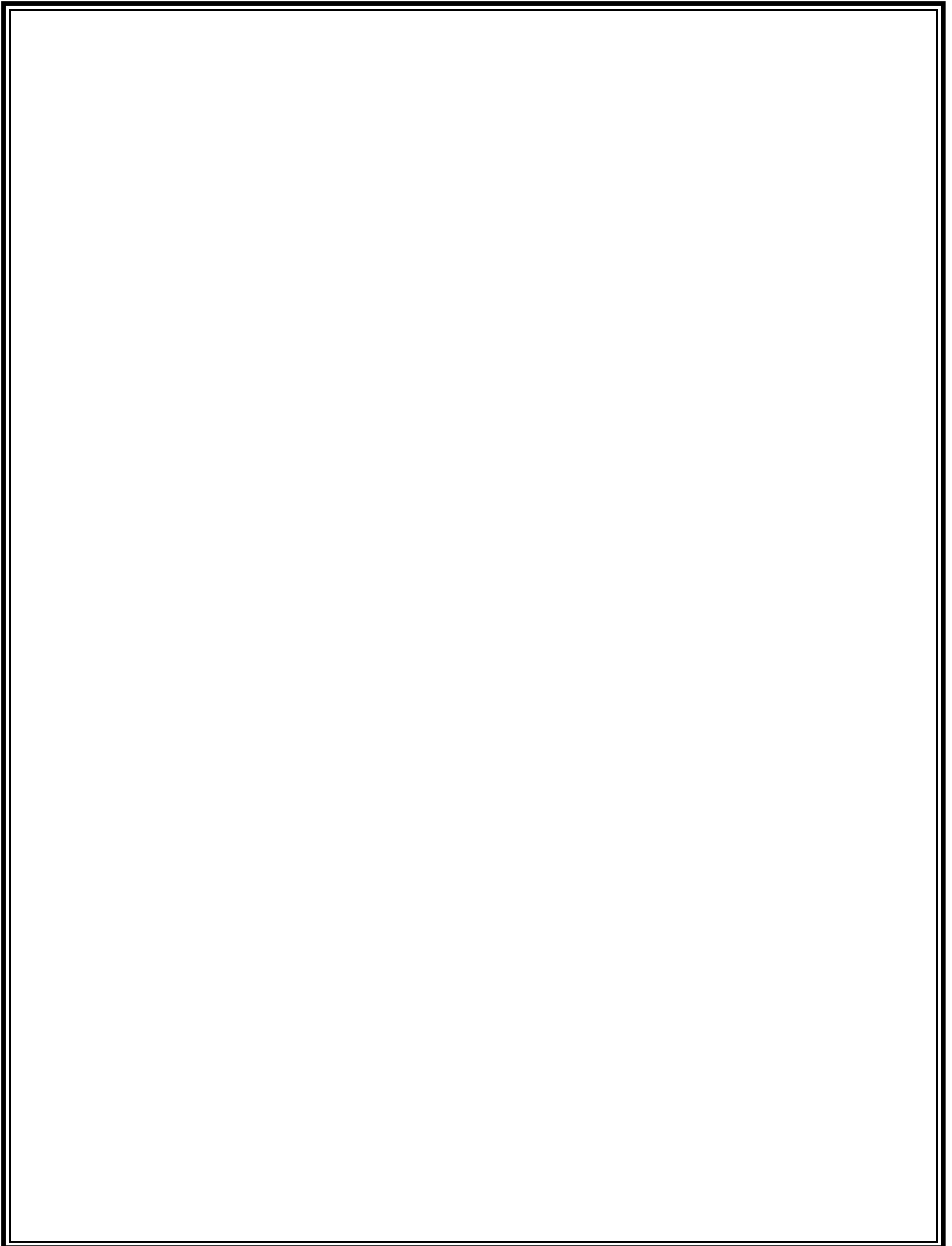
If the ground is too wet or you want color on the patio you can use these plants in containers. Another advantage of containers is the potential ability to get spring color even earlier. You can set the blooming containers out on days or nights when the temperature will be above 25 degrees and move them inside if the temperatures are predicted to fall below 25.

There are numerous colors to choose from for many plants that survive in cooler temperatures. Select the ones that seem most attractive to you. While all of these plants are considered annuals in most of the country, some, such as dianthus and violas may reseed and provide color for several seasons when planted in beds.



< Dianthus  
*Great choice  
for early color!*

To assure optimum plant health and color, mix a granular fertilizer 10-10-10 into the beds as you prepare them for planting. You can also mix a small amount into the potting soil for your containers. Don't hesitate to plant early...and THINK SPRING!



---

---

 *E-mail [mkreuser@kanavaslandscape.com](mailto:mkreuser@kanavaslandscape.com) ... with any landscape questions you may have!*