



In-Town Garden Ideas

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Garden Service

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Seeking Higher Ground: On Being a Better Gardener

There is no doubt that I am a very lucky person. To be living in Savannah in a historic house on one of our prettiest squares is terrific. I have a supportive partner and a network of wonderful clients who have entrusted me with a very valuable asset and a very emotionally important aspect of their lives: their downtown gardens. In January of 1999 when I started R.C. Melander Garden Service, I was not sure exactly where it would lead. And there have been some moments when I did not think I could make it work. But I have grown and continue to learn and improve my techniques and I **REALLY** love what I do. In business we sometimes have to respond to events and opportunities when they arise or “forever hold your peace”. Recently I had such an opportunity and I knew I had to respond or lose it. As some of you know, I have leased some land very close to downtown from a former employer. I have purchased a 20-foot insulated shipping container and had it delivered there on Saturday the 31st of May. I plan on using it for storage and I also have available for my use a fenced lockable yard that I plan on using for plants. The past few springs and falls have seen my downtown courtyard filled up with plants purchased for various planting jobs and it will be a good thing not to have to do that anymore. I attended five sessions of the SBAC small business workshops held in May which were focused on issues of interest to me and one of the best things that happened is I met Kathleen Collins of John W. Powell, Sr. RPA. Kathleen is an enrolled agent and she is going to help maintain all my employee records. I have hired a student to work with me 2 days a week. It is all a bit challenging but I think I am ready. With the investments I am making I am planning to do more with my business. My main goal is to improve the quality of my service and to work with high quality gardens to provide more seasonal color, more drip irrigation for pots and more ‘regular’ maintenance visits. If you would like to upgrade the nature of the service I provide to you, please call me if I can help you. I believe some of you would benefit from this new development and I will be contacting you soon with more details. I would like to work with the clients I already have before I respond to new downtown clients.

On The Fringe

One of the nice things about driving soBrou on Price Street in spring is this beautiful Burgundy Loropetalum behind Wayne and Murray's house at State Street. We have Doctor J.C. Raulston of The University of North Carolina to thank for these new forms of Chinese Loropetalum that now come in several varieties. The original form introduced to this country and available at the turn of the last century was white with green leaves and while showy it is not as nice as this. The foliage of several of these colorful plants comes in a rich burgundy. This is a great plant for our Savannah gardens



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Mission Statement

In-Town Garden Ideas is a publication of Ron Melander Garden Service. The purpose of this newsletter is to provide a format for sharing information with clients and friends about garden related thoughts and issues, with a slant towards the downtown area. R.C. Melander Garden Services was formed in January of 1999 and is a home-based business. As a business person working and living downtown, all issues relating to the well-being of Savannah's Historic Districts are important to me. My goal is to help improve the quality of life for everyone downtown through the beautification of our public and private garden spaces.

IT'S A BUG EAT BUG WORLD

It is a joy to watch the lacewing insects hovering around my garden in the evenings. They are such gentle acting creatures. One would not guess that they and their larvae are ferocious predators of the insect pests found in our gardens. Pictured below are the larvae and eggs of the lady beetle, another harmless looking insect that helps reduce the numbers of 'bad' bugs in our gardens. I found them on my truck one morning after a heavy rain had washed them off the crepe myrtle trees above. Both lady beetles and larvae feed on aphids, mealybugs, immature scale insects, mites and other soft-bodied bugs that can hurt our plants. They are all part of a very complex system of nature that when understood can be used in an Integrated Pest Management program. Often the complaint with aphids on trees is because of the "sticky stuff on my car" or the black sooty mold that can occur on the leaves. The sooty mold can also make a sidewalk turn black. Hopefully the rains this year will cure all of this naturally but if you have a problem I recommend pressure washing the sidewalk and washing the car. Unless the trees are flowering and depending on what insects are present at the time, you may want to use a hose and blast them with a strong spray of water or *pressure wash the trees but don't tear the leaves!*

To learn more go to <http://woodypest.ifas.ufl.edu/ipmmap.htm>

