Good afternoon and thanks for joining us; I am Judy Simpson. Landscaping is much more than just mowing grass or edging walks, as you are about to see the landscaping profession is just that and has many highly skilled professionals here in Vermont as we'll also see these professional landscape architects and designers practice nation-wide. To take us away once again from the winter with images of some of the top Vermont landscapes and landscaping ideas, is our frequent guest from UVM Extension, horticulturist Leonard Perry. It’s great to see you again.

Leonard.: It’s great to be back.

Judy.: And you brought a friend.

Leonard.: I did bring a friend and colleague; professional Ed Burke from Rocky Dale Gardens but also he is very active with the association Green Works, the Vermont Nursery and Landscape Association and he brought this idea of a landscape awards program to highlight some of these great professionals we have in the state. This is the third year now so we brought great pictures. A lot of these are large landscapes and when you're looking through these you can actually get a lot of ideas for the smallest of landscapes and how plants are put together and design ideas.

Judy.: Ed, welcome to you. Can you give me some of the details on the contest that you ran?

Ed.: Thank you. Most states have professional organizations such as the Nursery and Landscape Association and many of them have contests for their landscaping projects. We decided to initiate this in Vermont both to point out the importance of landscaping and to recognize the work by our members. We have six award categories and several of those have a subcategory of design or build because many people don't design the projects that they wind up building and many people build the projects that somebody else designed. We have three award levels and in those we have the grand honor award which is our highest award. We have exceeds excellence which is our second award and the judges this year created the merit award which is a brand new award projects that they felt were deserving but we didn't have an award level for those.
Judy.: Tell me about the judges how did you pick them?

Ed.: The judging panel is made up of a group of professionals, landscape architects landscape designers, landscape contractors, educators and professional horticulturists. Our process is that we lock them in a room for an entire day and subject them to all the slides. We give them a packet of detailed material for each project. There's a narrative included with all the nuances of the project and a plan as well. The identities of the judges and the identities of the participants are kept undisclosed to keep it objective. What can I say it's always an excruciating process for these judges especially when the projects are of such high caliber.

Judy.: Let's see some of the winners who do we have first?

Leonard.: I guess we first start with first place the grand honor we had two winners. We'll go right to some photos of that. The first one is just a large scale residential, and it is a build. This is--this is before not after. We'll take a look at the ‘after’ and it is later in the season.

Ed.: This is an interesting project it was designed by a firm out of Washington, DC., Oehme Van Sweden, which is a very well-known firm they're known for their use of perennials and large swaths and sustainable design. This project was lucky to get in because Wolfgang Oehme just died this past December.

Leonard.: One of the trademarks you'll see going through are the swaths of perennials that's one of their trademark, the ornamental grasses, the black-eyed susans or daisies. You can see that wall is just covered up with these perennials and I think these people wanted their summer camp on the lake to have more of a summer effect. The plants were geared a lot to bloom later this summer. Here you see a hibiscus again with masses of one of the daisy type of perennials looking down towards the lake. Here's a good example I think of that. Several things going on one is the massive perennials we're talking about but nice steps, local stone, hand wrought iron rails from local farms; a little locally-sourced materials.

Ed.: You see a lot of the ornamental grass is planted in mass that Oehme Van Sweden is known for.

Leonard.: Here's the upper patio again you can see it's beautiful a lot of great hard-scape work in the state there's a lot of professionals. It takes a lot to make one of these walls if you've ever tried. Not only the weight but just getting it to stay together so that its looks good and lasts a long time. This was the second grand honor award as you can see commercial design which is actually a school. Do you want to tell us about Julie?

Ed.: Julie is an internationally-known author and designer her work is known all over the world and this project. She's from Saxon’s River. This project is a school. It has a beaver as a mascot. It's a memorial garden for some students who had died at all too young an age at the school.

Leonard.: There on the right you can see a little beaver statue. You have a walk going in. She actually used the students to help design this so it is designed with all the things you'd find. You have a beaver lodge that you will see next, wood going up there, snags of old trees, wetland plants just like you find near beaver. Here's where students use for classes and the center is a
little memorial. They wanted this to be a happy garden not a sad memorial garden. It's just a fountain in the middle with the names of the people on it.

Ed.: Julie is known for her whimsical designs and really involving everyone in the process.

Leonard.: Again using the students making these. This is in the pavement so when you walk through you stop and look at it and makes you pause. A lot of her landscapes it's one of her trademarks using them to make you do certain things like here you stop and look in these bits of glass that students threw in the wet pavement that got pressed in there. Just little details like that even at home if you're doing something as simple as this. It's so many things going on between the contrasts, the colors the textures. Basically a beaver dam made of these logs if you will representational, contrasted with the stone. The golden creeping jenny coming out over the walk. Again a lot a little details in this one setting again that anyone could do at home. And of course bright colors here. Liatris and blazing star and daylilies something you might not think about putting together but again that's very happy and it's going to catch your attention at the school.

Judy.: That's beautiful. So those were couple of really inspirational landscapes. It's amazing to see the before and after pictures and I love that; some really creative ideas. The next award level was exceeds excellence and who are your winners?

Ed.: We have distinctive landscaping up next.

Leonard.: Yeah we will take a look at some of those; we had four winners and it shows you some of the different categories that we can take a look at. First as we mentioned is distinctive landscaping and this is a large scale residential and design. The design and install.

Ed.: They probably installed it but they submit it under design and what I like about this project is that it seemed to get into the backyard without upsetting the entire lot and they just took a part of the backyard and created this nice oasis, swimming pool, and patio. A place to sit outdoors and if you notice in the background of you can see how they've worked too blend the native landscaping with the backyard so closer to the house they most likely have a more cultivated landscape and then they have this nice buffer where they've introduced some edge plants to then go into the wild.

Leonard.: The clients wanted the plants to be up near the pool. On this side it's almost like you're swimming with those plants here we have iris and Japanese maple.

Judy.: It looks like it's been there all along.

Leonard.: You wouldn't think it it's just been there a year or two. The other thing that's interesting is this is actually preserved land in the back and there's a gate they put in so there are several things going in here. One is using that I think that's a very powerful concept is to use the surrounding landscape, borrow from the landscape if you will if you have a view or something like this take advantage of it and then here of course the shade garden with hostas and ferns. Again you wouldn't know it's just been a year or two it's pretty amazing.

Ed.: This is a commercial management award and this is Equinox on the Battenkill Project by Garden Arts. It's a several-acre property. Everyone who is taking care of property that has
numerous condos and things like that knows that there's a lot of people to please and there are acres and acres of lawns to mow and beds to maintain. One of the interesting things I like about this project is that they are trying to remove invasives as part of their ongoing maintenance care and replace those with non-invasive plants. They're not responsible for all the plantings that are there but they're making the improvements every year as the budget allows.

Leonard.: It's more the management then the maintenance of these; individual people who may maintain and have their own garden by the house but up to that they maintain that and help them with that. Then this is a special one Ed.

Ed.: This is an indoor business park. There's two parts to this project. They call it an indoor oasis, I believe. Landshapes has created two islands with water features and plants that mimic the Vermont outdoors. All I can say about this is that it's so nice in Vermont to have a place you can go indoors because Vermont winters are so long although this winter might be an exception.

Leonard.: This is a great plant, I love the peace lilies, the wide-leaf form you see a mass here but again one for low light it's one I love at home. I thought it was interesting you said the client wanted a landscape indoors of tropicaIs but looked like Vermont. It was their challenge to say OK what looks like a day lily with strapped like leaves? What looks like spruce or fir trees? Maybe that's a Norfolk pine just a lot of things going on there. Finally this one is again a special project. This one was in Georgia you can tell it doesn't look much like Vermont with the palm trees are least not yet. And that's a Magnolia tree, a very old one that's very prized at this property.

Ed.: This is a hickory head Magnolia. With the threat of that possibly falling down they created a support system. They actually drilled through the tree and created a steel rib cage and they put in the supports. They put in a structure to take care of lightning so the tree will stand for many years to come.

Leonard.: It's amazing people think wow aren't you hurting it but a lot of that is dead wood so there holding it together with the live wood inside. On the left is the lightning rod basically coming down. They put it out from the tree in the ground and they actually cabled the tree so if it does fall over, it doesn't fall in the house.

Judy.: It's not going anywhere anytime soon.

Leonard.: No, it's not.

Judy.: There's also the merit award and who is the professional landscape winners?

Ed.: We had three merit awards and I guess we'll go right into it.

Leonard.: The first was interesting it's a schoolhouse design but it's not a traditional schoolhouse.

Ed.: Right this was the schoolhouse for the actual home on the property and where they sent their kids to school. This is in Essex New York. It’s a very interesting design and unique building too.

Leonard.: If you go back to the photo we can look it before, and then you'll see the afterwards. You can see there it's on a slope with some drainage area underneath that. They
actually changed the grade on that, you can see there's gravel around it there are plantings to separate it from the road. Some container plants near the building and then you have some catnip and ornamental onions. It's a very simple design repetition and it really works. Then we'll see a month later with green pods as the ornamental onion have gone by. It's a very nice one.

Ed.: This is a small project in Vergennes, just a patio and entrance to an 1850’s house. A blue stone walkway formal entry

Leonard.: Boxwood hedge in the middle there.

Ed.: These photos are probably right after installation.

Leonard.: This I thought was interesting so often we forget to look at the landscape from the inside but a lot of times in Vermont that's what we're doing. Keep that in mind when you're putting together a landscape what it's going to look like from inside.

Ed.: This is the Davis Center at the University. A LEED-certified building. Landscape design by Vermont landscape architect Keith Wagner. Installed by Landshapes. Interesting paving patterns. A lot of lawns and a green roof.

Leonard.: This is actually on a roof with some of the building underneath. They have a wonderful ornamental grass display to encourage people to get by and see if you haven't. It looks like you're in the Midwest when you're walking through even though you're in the city. Again a good example designed by one firm, but installed by another. This one so the judges were actually looking at construction and how it is put together.

Judy.: That's a real diversity of projects.

Ed.: Yes that was a lot it was fast moving.

Leonard.: It's amazing all around the country and from all types of things.

Judy.: This annual contest is sponsored by your association Ed the Vermont Nursery and Landscape Association?

Ed.: Yes Judy our professional organization is made up of wholesale and retail nurseries and landscape architects landscape designers landscape contractors arborists and more.

Judy.: And the web site is?

Leonard.: There is a website of course and it has a lot of great information including the upcoming flower show this next year. The dates on that but its www.greenworksvt.org and you can learn about the flower show which Ed is?

Ed.: The flower show theme is the road less traveled for 2013 and we're really looking forward to putting that show on. Based on Robert Frost's poem “The Road Less Traveled.”
Judy: Awesome; I look forward to that. Thanks so much for joining us today. Great pictures. That’s our program for today. I’m Judy Simpson. I’ll see you again next time on *Across the Fence*.

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