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## GARDENS OF THE *Year*

the magical spaces of  
our first annual competition

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# KCHG GARDENS of the YEAR

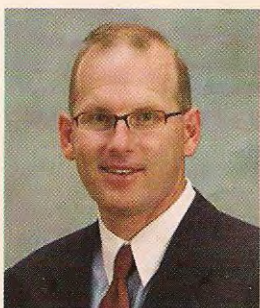
We first thought up the idea to start a new garden competition in the middle of a February cold snap. In the midst of a white wonderland, we dreamed of lush greenery, splendid color and useful outdoor amenities. We asked professionals and green thumbs alike to share their projects with us — and the results were just what we hoped they would be. Here are the winning projects of our inaugural Gardens of the Year competition.

## Meet the Judges



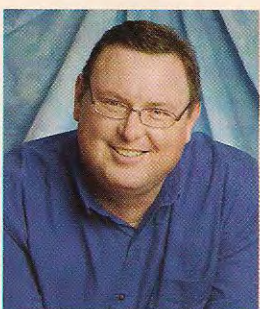
### Alan Branhagen

Alan is the Director of Horticulture at Powell Gardens and author of *The Gardener's Butterfly Book*. He holds a bachelor's degree and master's degree in landscape architecture from Iowa State University and Louisiana State University, respectively, specializes in garden design and maintenance, and has supervised and designed dozens of landscaping projects. A member of the American Public Gardens Association, Alan plays a key role in Powell Gardens, one of the largest botanical gardens in this region. The garden boasts world-class architecture and more than 17,000 accessions of plant displays that capture the essence of the American Midwest.



### Kurt Kraisinger

Kurt is president of Lorax Designs and is a member of both the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) and the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB). He graduated from Kansas State University with a Bachelor of Science in Landscape Architecture and is currently working toward a master's degree in Regional and Community Planning from the University of Nebraska, Lincoln. Kurt is registered in eight states and is certified in Leadership in Energy and Environmental Designs (LEED), which gives him the opportunity to work on eco-friendly projects.



### Dennis Patton

Dennis just completed his 28th year as a horticulture agent at Johnson County K-State Research and Extension. He graduated from Kansas State University with a bachelor's degree in Horticulture and a master's degree in Adult Education, and he specializes in lawn and garden education. Dennis administers the Extension Master Gardener Program, which is a program that trains local volunteers interested in gardening. With more than 400 volunteers who have collectively contributed 44,000 hours of community service, the Extension Master Gardener Program is one of the top programs of its kind in the country. Dennis was just named Top Columnist in the nation for 2010-2011 by the National Association of County Agricultural Agents.



### Lyndsi Oestmann

Lyndsi is the vice president of family-owned Loma Vista Nursery, the largest wholesale grower in Kansas that sells specifically to landscape contractors and retail nurseries. She graduated from Kansas State University with degrees in Marketing & International Business and Spanish. Lyndsi is president of the Hort NetWORK, which promotes green education in the Kansas City area, and is a member of the American Nursery and Landscape Association (ANLA) and the Kansas Nursery and Landscape Association. Not only does she manage the nursery's sales representatives, but she's also in charge of selecting which plants to grow for the season.





## Best Professional Landscape Reed Dillon & Associates

PHOTOS COURTESY OF REED DILLON & ASSOCIATES

Privacy was priority for this California Mission-style house. The homeowners, who entertain on a regular basis, asked designer Reed Dillon for an expansive backyard that consisted of fountains, a small pool, outdoor kitchen, fire pit, putting green and generous plantings. A retaining wall was built on the sloped site, and the rest of the yard was dropped six feet for a level surface to accommodate the wish list. The gardens reflect the level of detail applied to the house, as though they were designed together. Linear flagstone terraces offer places for groups of all sizes to sit and mingle during soirees. A custom-made pergola with copper panels frames the kitchen space, casting unique shadow patterns. As requested, two fountains were installed as well as a modest pool. Abundant flora, including azaleas, hydrangeas, lilies and roses, is scattered throughout the yard, and spruce trees planted along the retaining wall provide additional privacy.

### Resources:

*Terrace Stone:* Sturgis Materials;

*Custom Copper Shade Panels:* Parasoleil

### Judges' Comments:

The Mission-style design is masterfully carried throughout the landscape, including the hardscape from the patio to retaining wall. The plantings are appropriate for the site, especially the backdrop of dense evergreen screening, and the maintenance is impeccable. The site amenities beckon one to relax and entertain.



## Best Curb Appeal Silver Leaf Lawn & Landscape

PHOTOS BY JEFF KOLICH

Homeowner and designer Jeff Kolich could never have enough color in his front yard, and as his garden evolved over the years, he increased his use of tropicals to achieve the desired effect. A refrigerated semi-truck transported hundreds of plants directly from Florida, including palm trees — one reaching more than 24 feet tall — and a variety of hanging baskets. A true labor of love, the tropical plants are overwintered at Silver Leaf's 10-acre business property, where they are cared for until the following season. The rare-to-the-region species mix with perennials and evergreens for a look that is unique and fresh every season.

### Judges' Comments:

The wide array of color in this tropical landscape must turn heads on the street. The repeating use of colors in the foliage and annuals match nicely.



## Best Professional Landscape Reed Dillon & Associates

PHOTOS COURTESY OF REED DILLON & ASSOCIATES

A classic and modest design solution was in order for the backyard of this Georgian home. With two sons grown, the owners didn't need any fancy accessories, just an elegant design that would reflect the style of their home. Because of an existing drainage swale bisecting the backyard, designer Reed Dillon decided on a "destination pool" situated farther from the house. Three bluestone weirs protrude from the brick fountain wall that borders one side of the pool, providing the calming sound of falling water. Beds of boxwood, hydrangea and spruce plantings suit the clean, simple aesthetic. The space is connected via bluestone path to a brick patio next to the house, used constantly for entertaining or simply just to be.

### Resources:

Stone: Sturgis Materials; Pedestal Urns: Family Tree Nursery;

Pool: Stranger Creek Pools

### Judges' Comments:

The design is clean, elegant and consistent. The hardscape is simple yet sophisticated, and the plant color scheme of blue, creamy white and rose pink is balanced and impeccably maintained.

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