

Ridge Administration Announces 'Growing Greener' Funds

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.)—Lt. Gov. Mark Schweiker marked the fifth week of "100 Days of Growing Greener" by announcing \$50,000 in "Growing Greener" funds to help 10 communities across the state to develop community gateway gardens.

"With these gardens, 'Growing Greener' helps cities and towns provide a more scenic welcome for residents and visitors," Lt. Gov. Schweiker said. "This proves that sometimes just a small amount of financial support from the commonwealth can

pay huge dividends to communities. In this case, \$50,000 helps 10 urban areas display community pride. What a difference a small plot of flowers makes to an urban landscape, where concrete normally rules. It's all about making Pennsylvania's quality of life even better."

The Community Gateway Gardens is a partnership program among the Pennsylvania departments of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) and Transportation (PennDOT), and the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy.

The gardens will beautify small tracts at key entranceways into the towns and cities planted with colorful displays of annuals, perennials, ornamental grasses, shrubs and small flowering trees.

Grants are awarded to develop gardens in Beaver, Blair, Butler, Cambria, Cumberland, Dauphin, Schuylkill, and Westmoreland counties. For 100 days—from the Farm Show in early January until Earth Day on April 22—Gov. Ridge and his Administration are announcing at least one new "Growing Greener" initia-

tive every week to show how the state's largest-ever environmental investment is benefiting Pennsylvanians.

"Growing Greener" funding for these gardens will support design, soil testing for proper pH, purchase of topsoil, compost, mulch and flowers, and the installation of drip irrigation for water supply. Subsequent replanting of the gardens is the responsibility of each municipality.

Community Gateways Gardens is an offshoot of the

Western Pennsylvania Conservancy's Community Flower Bed program, begun in 1983 in Allegheny County.

The program has grown from six flowerbeds in the city of Pittsburgh to more than 400 garden sites across the commonwealth. In 1998, DCNR initiated the Community Gateways Gardens partnership with the conservancy. PennDOT joined the partnership in 1999, adding funds from the federal Transportation Enhancement Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21).

Craig Receives Grower Award

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.)—Pennsylvania State University Professor of Horticulture, Dr. Richard Craig, was presented with the Pennsylvania Floral Industry Association's Flower Grower Award on Feb. 3 at the Capitol Region Greenhouse Grower Meeting in Leola.

The award for outstanding and meritorious contribution to the floriculture industry was presented to Craig in recognition of his lifetime of research in the field of plant breeding and genetics.

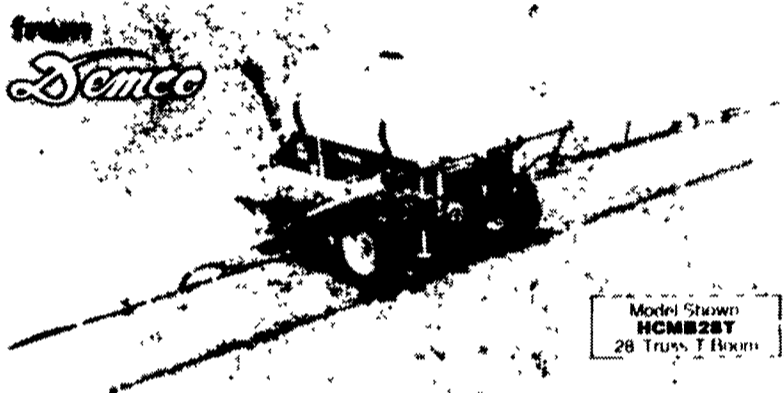
Craig is well known for his work in the development of the world's first seed geranium, "Nittany Lion Red," that has led to the multitude of geranium varieties available to the home gardener today.

Craig's current work includes development of new varieties of Exacum for fresh flower, potted plant, and garden uses, studying Botrytis resistance in geraniums, breeding new improved cultivars of Regal geraniums that will bloom all summer, and studying pest resistance, seed production, and techniques for cultivar identification in poinsettias.

In addition to research Craig has taught many classes at Penn State, including plant breeding, advanced plant breeding, experimental procedures in plant research, and horticultural systematics. Craig

has conducted many independent study more than 40 graduate senior seminars and projects and trained students.

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