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FALL 2025

VOLUME 42
NUMBER 3

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Workshop Highlights:

Thurs Oct 30

Understanding the benefits of porcelain pavers and comparison to other products along with a discussion on installation methods.

Thurs Nov 20

Hands on hard set installation methods over concrete and crushed limestone, along with cutting and shaping techniques.

Wear your work gear for this one.

Thurs Dec 11

Hands on installation methods, focusing on elevated applications with a variety of pedestal systems along with cutting and shaping techniques.

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EMAIL: LAURAS@NATURALSTONETILEGALLERY.COM TO REGISTER



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A message from the President



Greetings ILA members and Happy Fall!

The year is closing in fast and I hope everything is going well within your organization and

you are meeting or exceeding your goals for the year. One of my professional goals has always been to be an instructor for what we know as ICPI (Interlocking Concrete Paver Institute) and NCMA (National Concrete Masonry Association). A few years ago, these two organizations merged and rebranded as CMHA (Concrete Masonry Hardscape Association). I recently completed a trip to Irving, TX where I attended a training event with the CMHA for instructor training to facilitate classes for the Certified Paver Installer Coarse and the Segmental Retaining Wall Course.

One thing I really enjoy about these events is meeting new people and creating new relationships and the power of relationships. Good relationships are critical to success. If you want to be successful at anything you do – at work, at home, in life – relationships are paramount. You must build good relationships with the people you depend on and with those who depend on you.

Being an active member of the ILA has helped me to build relationships that have lasted decades. If I had not met the people I have and built relationships with the people who encouraged me, pushed me and challenged me, I don't think I would have set this goal, let alone accomplished it.

One of the events that we host every year where relationships are build, nurtured and created is the ILA Golf Outing. This is such a wonderful event, and I know I wouldn't be who I am today (good or bad) if it weren't for the golf outing. With that I want to give a special "Thank You" to all those who attended and contributed to our annual ILA Golf Outing benefitting the Frits Loonsten Memorial Scholarship. We had the highest number of golfers ever registered for the event. Great job to the committee, sponsors and golfers for another wonderful event. It's always tough with classes being back in session, but this year we were able to have each of the 2024 scholarship recipients and some of their family attend the check presentation and give a few words. These individuals bring a dynamic and exciting future to the industry.

Please mark your calendar for Friday December 12, 2025, for the ILA Annual Meeting / Holiday Party. This year is the "Passing of the Gavel" where we will officially announce the next present of the association.

Warm regards,

Chris Geryak, President

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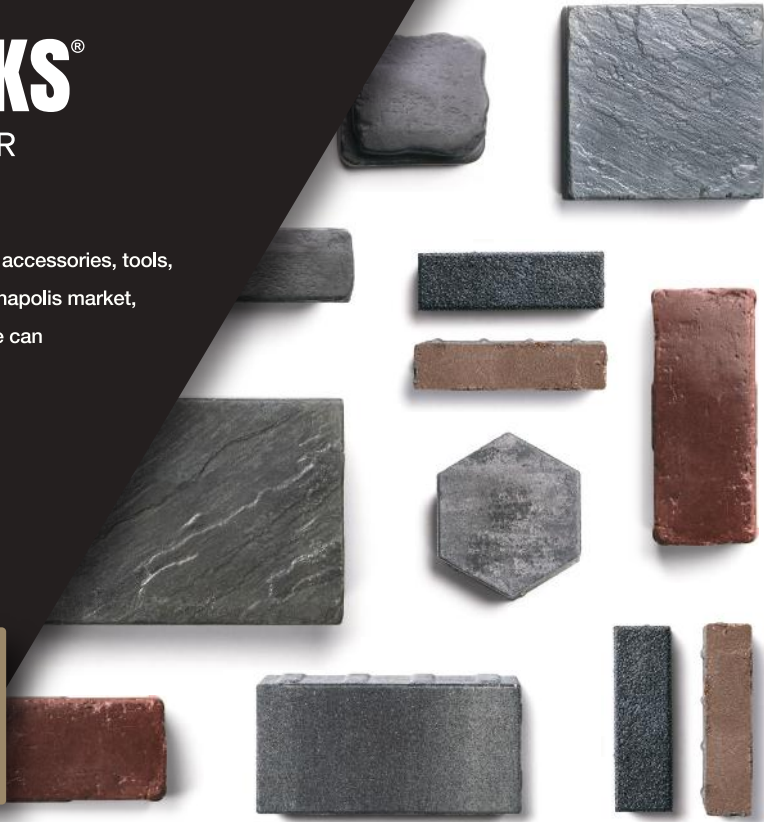
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ILA GOLF OUTING 2025: A Resounding Success!



We did it again! The ILA Golf Outing, benefiting the Frits Looneston Scholarship Fund, was another incredible success. We extend our sincere gratitude to all attendees and sponsors for their invaluable contributions to this impactful event.

This year, we hosted 41 teams and 163 golfers, supported by 35 generous sponsors. Their commitment is the cornerstone of this event, and we truly appreciate their partnership. Thanks to everyone's generosity, we surpassed our fundraising goal, raising over \$18,000 for the Scholarship committee to award to next year's deserving recipients. It's important to remember that this golf outing is our sole fundraiser for the Frits Looneston Scholarship Fund, making its success even more vital.

We were thrilled to award four scholarships this year to deserving Landscape Architecture students within our industry.

The highly anticipated ILA Cup was claimed by the Sherco Group – congratulations on your win! The traveling trophy for Best



Interactive Hole Sponsor was proudly presented to Barthuly Irrigation, one of our newest tee sponsors.

I want to personally thank everyone who attended. Your participation is what makes this event a triumph. Each year, we strive to make the ILA Golf Outing bigger and better, and we eagerly anticipate your return next September for more fun, camaraderie, and support for this excellent cause!

For more information on how you can be a part of this amazing event, please contact me at travis@haulstr.com.





From Indoors to Outdoors: Natural Stone & Tile Expands Its Showroom Experience



Natural Stone & Tile

BEAUTIFUL ENVIRONMENTS



Since 1996, **Natural Stone & Tile (NST)** has been a trusted partner to the landscape, builder, and design communities. Known for exceptional

products and service, NST has taken the next step in its journey with the creation of a new indoor-outdoor living showroom. This visionary space is designed to inspire, educate, and transform the way outdoor living is imagined.

“We’ve always wanted to create more than a showroom,” said Laura Gunderman, NST Owner and CEO. “We wanted to create an environment where designers, contractors and customers can be inspired, educated, and truly see what’s possible.”

A New Kind of Showroom

At the heart of this new showroom is a **3,000-square-foot selection center for domestic and foreign-made porcelain pavers**. Clients will no longer be limited to



choosing from a single piece on a handle board. Instead, they can walk across multiple full-size installations, gaining a true understanding of how the material looks, feels, and performs in real spaces.

“When customers can see and touch full installations instead of tiny samples, they start to imagine their own spaces differently and that’s the magic of this showroom,” said Gunderman.

Building Confidence Through Education

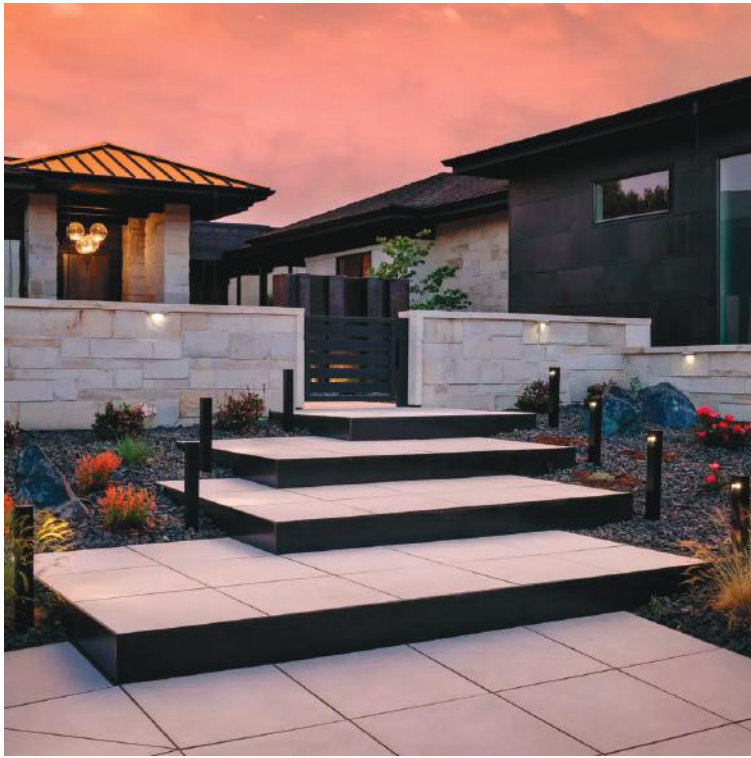
For many in the landscape industry, installing porcelain pavers still feels unfamiliar compared to traditional concrete pavers. NST recognizes this as one of the biggest challenges and is positioning itself not only as a product provider but also as an education partner.

Most installers are experienced and comfortable working with concrete pavers. Porcelain pavers are still the new kids on the block. Installation and cutting methods are different and can sometimes be intimidating.

This focus on education is at the core of **NST’s Mirage Training Center**, where contractors, designers,



and builders learn best practices for porcelain paver installation. This fall, NST will launch a **three-part educational series** designed to provide product knowledge, hands-on training and real-world application.



“We’re committed to setting the standard in outdoor living by blending innovation, education, and service. Our goal is to give professionals and homeowners the tools they need to succeed,” said Gunderman.

NST’s next step is the creation of an outdoor living space designed as an extension of the showroom experience. Envisioned as a “hidden garden,” this future destination will allow customers and industry professionals to experience products in real-life applications such as patios, pools, walkways, and fireplaces. It will also serve as a community hub, with opportunities to host events, showcases, and gatherings where NST’s materials and vision come to life. By reimagining the showroom experience, NST is raising the bar for innovation, education, and design while shaping the future of outdoor living.

“This fall’s series is just the beginning. We see education as a long-term investment in the industry and in our partners’ success,” said Gunderman.

“NST’s products give us the flexibility to create spaces that are both functional and beautiful. Their team is always available with guidance, which makes a huge difference on complex projects,” says Wesley Silk, Owner/Principal of Earth Landscape Architecture.

Attention to Detail – It’s the Little Things that Matter
While inspiration and education are key, NST is equally focused on the details. NST ensures that every project receives personal attention, guidance, and care from start to finish. From selecting the right product to supporting the installer with proper installation methods, NST helps customers not only imagine their ideal outdoor space but also bring it to life. Details make all the difference. That’s why we’re committed to being present from product selection to installation support,” said Gunderman.

Looking Ahead

For nearly three decades, Natural Stone & Tile has led with vision and innovation. Now, with its new Indoor-Outdoor Living Showroom, NST is preparing to usher in the next era of outdoor living where inspiration meets education and every product tells a story of possibility.



****See ad for 2025 Porcelain Educational Series FREE WORKSHOPS on Page 2.***



Clearing the Way: Essential Equipment for Efficient Leaf Removal



As autumn sets in, landscape professionals face one of the industry's most demanding seasonal tasks: leaf removal. While the vivid colors of fall foliage delight property owners, the fallen leaves that follow can quickly become an eyesore, smother turf, and create safety hazards. For landscape companies, efficient leaf management is more than a service — it's a mark of professionalism and an important revenue stream.

The Value of Timely Leaf Removal

Leaves left to accumulate can block sunlight, trap moisture, and foster mold and disease, all of which compromise turf health. On hardscapes, wet leaves increase the risk of slip-and-fall incidents. Clients expect fast, thorough removal, making the right mix of equipment essential for contractors who want to balance efficiency, safety, and profitability.

Core Equipment for Today's Crews

Backpack and Handheld Blowers

Blowers remain the cornerstone of leaf removal. Backpack blowers, with their higher power and ergonomic design, excel on larger properties, while handheld models are well-suited for



smaller, more detailed areas. Increasingly, battery-powered blowers are gaining traction for their lower noise levels and compliance with emerging emissions regulations in municipalities nationwide.

Walk-Behind Blowers

For expansive lawns, athletic fields, or campuses, walk-behind blowers deliver unmatched output. Their ability to move large volumes of leaves with minimal labor makes them an indispensable tool for contractors managing high-acreage sites.

Mulching Mowers

Mulching mowers provide a sustainable alternative to removal by shredding leaves into fine particles that quickly decompose. This approach not only eliminates disposal but also enriches the soil, offering eco-conscious clients a solution that's both efficient and environmentally responsible.

Vacuums and Collection Systems

Trailer- or truck-mounted vacuums are crucial for high-volume cleanup. These machines reduce the number of trips needed for disposal and save valuable time. For residential accounts, mower-mounted bagging systems and vacuums allow crews to efficiently collect leaves for curbside pickup or composting.

Tarps, Rakes, and Hand Tools

Even with advanced equipment, the classics remain relevant. Rakes and tarps are indispensable for tight corners, ornamental beds, and final cleanup, helping crews finish jobs to the highest standard.





Beyond the Basics: Supporting Tools

- **Dump Trailers:** Streamline transport and disposal of collected debris.
- **Fleet Management Software:** Improves scheduling, route efficiency, and accountability.
- **Safety Gear:** Protective eyewear, dust masks, and hearing protection safeguard crews during long days in the field.

Strategies for Efficiency

- **Plan Routes Wisely:** Group properties geographically to cut down on travel time.

- **Layer Equipment:** Use blowers, vacuums, and mulching in combination for different site conditions.
- **Maintain Your Fleet:** Proactive maintenance minimizes costly breakdowns during peak season.
- **Train Crews Thoroughly:** Proper training in both equipment use and safety practices ensures productivity and protects workers.

Conclusion

Leaf removal is more than a seasonal chore — it's an opportunity for landscape professionals to showcase efficiency, expertise, and commitment to client satisfaction. By combining the right equipment with smart planning and crew training, contractors can transform a labor-heavy task into a streamlined, profitable service. For companies looking to stand out in the fall marketplace, preparation and the right tools make all the difference.

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2025 Scholarship Winners



Esau Marcial

My name is Esau Marcial, and I'm a junior at Ball State University pursuing a degree in Landscape Architecture. Growing up on the west side of Indianapolis in a hardworking Hispanic household, I learned the value of perseverance and dedication from an early age.

I started my own landscaping company as a freshman in high school, inspired by my family's work ethic and the desire to create something meaningful. Over the years, my passion has grown into designing and building high-end residential and potentially commercial landscapes. I love helping clients bring their outdoor visions to life, creating spaces that are not only beautiful but also functional and meaningful.

Through my work and studies, my goal is to make a lasting impact on the communities I serve while continuing to grow my business and refine my craft.



Natilee Wahl

My name is Natilee Wahl, and I'm a junior at Ball State University majoring in Landscape Architecture with a minor in Sustainability.

I originally came to college planning to study interior design and architecture, but I quickly discovered my true passion for landscape architecture. I love that this field gives me the opportunity to design beautiful spaces while also making sure they are sustainable and supportive of native habitats. I'm inspired by all the opportunities landscape architecture has to offer.

This past summer, I interned with Engledow in their estates department. Moving forward, I hope to continue along that path while also expanding my knowledge of sustainable food production. I'm especially interested in using my skills to volunteer and help address food insecurity, not just by providing food, but by helping ensure that food is also healthy and nutritious. Although food can't heal or prevent everything, I believe a balanced body starts with a balanced meal, and that nourishing food truly makes a difference in how people feel, both physically and mentally!

2025 Scholarship Winners



Hudson Harreld

My name is Hudson Harreld, and I am a senior at Purdue University studying Agribusiness Finance, Turf Management, and Entrepreneurship. During my senior year of high school, I founded Harreld Lawn and Landscape LLC in Zionsville, Indiana, and have been fortunate to grow the business while also pursuing my education. Balancing school and running a company has given me valuable experience in leadership, customer service, and the day-to-day operations of the landscape industry.

After graduation, I plan to continue building my company in Central Indiana and to explore long-term opportunities that will allow me to expand and strengthen my role in the industry. I am very thankful to the Indianapolis Landscape Association and its members for awarding me this scholarship and for the continued support I've received as both a student and a landscape professional.



Heaylyn Kwiatkowski

Hello, I am Heaylyn Kwiatkowski. I got into landscape architecture by simply loving the outdoors and nature. At a young age, I worked maintenance for many different people throughout my community. Then I fell in love with learning more about the earth and how to make it a better place to live in. Now I continue to learn about many different parts of landscape architecture while I am in my 3rd year at Ball State, majoring in landscape architecture and minoring in environmental sustainability. Future plans would be along the lines of researching, testing, or designing for commercial spaces.



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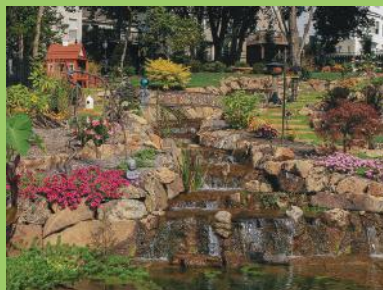
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Preparing for Early Snow: October Readiness Strategies for Landscape Companies



As the calendar turns to October, landscaping companies across North America face a unique challenge: balancing the tail end of fall services with the looming possibility of an early snowfall. While autumn often brings a final push of cleanups, aeration, and winter plantings, an unexpected snow event can quickly disrupt operations. Companies that take October as a month of preparation, however, position themselves to respond efficiently, protect profitability, and reinforce their reputation for reliability.

Solidifying Service Agreements

Early-season snow highlights the importance of proactive client communication and contract management. By October, companies should have all snow and ice management agreements finalized, with terms clearly defined regarding service triggers, response times, and site-specific requirements.

Pre-season site walks are also essential. Identifying potential hazards such as uneven pavement, drainage issues, or concealed curbs reduces liability and helps crews avoid costly mistakes when the first plow is dropped. This groundwork fosters trust and minimizes the risk of disputes once the snow begins to fly.

Readying the Fleet

Equipment reliability is the backbone of snow operations. October is the ideal time to conduct comprehensive inspections and preventative

maintenance. Plow blades, skid steers, and spreaders should be checked for wear, fluids replaced, and electrical systems tested under load conditions.

Equally important is ensuring that backup equipment is operational. Stocking spare parts — from cutting edges and hoses to lighting kits — allows crews to quickly resolve breakdowns and maintain service continuity during the season's earliest storms.

Securing Materials in Advance

Supply chain disruptions have made material planning more critical than ever. October offers a window of opportunity to secure adequate stocks of salt, treated ice melt, and alternative de-icers before demand spikes and shortages occur.

Storing materials properly is just as important as procurement. Covered, dry facilities protect product integrity and ensure application effectiveness when needed most. Training crews on appropriate application rates further optimizes efficiency and reduces waste, safeguarding profit margins in a competitive market.

Training and Mobilizing Crews

Transitioning landscape crews into snow operations requires intentional planning. October is an opportune time to conduct refresher training sessions on equipment operation, site safety, and slip-and-fall prevention protocols.

Route assignments and updated site maps should be distributed in advance, along with clearly defined on-



call rotations. Establishing communication protocols — whether through radios, mobile apps, or group messaging systems — ensures a coordinated response during the first storm event.

Leveraging Technology and Forecasting

In today's snow industry, technology plays a central role in both efficiency and accountability. Subscribing to reliable weather services provides critical lead time for mobilization, while GPS-enabled route management software enhances accountability and reduces liability by documenting service in real time.

Testing digital communication tools before the first storm ensures that both supervisors and field crews can rely on them when speed and accuracy are paramount.

Ensuring Financial Preparedness

Finally, October is the month to review the financial backbone of snow operations. Insurance coverage specific to snow and ice work should be verified, billing systems

tested, and budgets aligned for the additional costs of fuel, overtime pay, and subcontractor support. Early financial planning helps companies weather not only the snow but the unpredictable cash flow that often accompanies it.

Conclusion

October may still feel like autumn, but for landscape companies, it is the critical month to transition into snow readiness. By finalizing agreements, preparing equipment, securing materials, training crews, leveraging technology, and reviewing financial safeguards, contractors can confidently embrace the season's first snow — whether it arrives in mid-winter or unexpectedly in October.

In the snow and ice management industry, preparation is not a luxury; it is the foundation of safety, efficiency, and long-term profitability.



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TOP 5 TREES FOR INDIANA FALL COLOR



Autumn is the season when landscapes throughout Indianapolis truly come alive. Clients notice the vibrant reds, oranges, and yellows that line streets, frame homes, and anchor commercial sites. For professional landscapers, fall color is more than just aesthetic value — it's a selling point that showcases thoughtful plant selection and long-term planning.

Here are five standout trees that consistently deliver reliable, brilliant fall displays in central Indiana.

1. Red Maple (*Acer rubrum*)

Fall Color: Brilliant scarlet to orange-red
Why Use It: This is one of the most iconic fall color trees. It adapts well to many soil types, making it a versatile choice for Indianapolis landscapes.

Pro Tip: Cultivars such as 'October Glory' or 'Red Sunset' perform especially well here, with better resistance to chlorosis.

2. Sugar Maple (*Acer saccharum*)

Fall Color: Fiery oranges, warm golds, and occasional reds

Why Use It: The sugar maple is the classic Midwestern fall tree. Its bold, long-lasting color makes it a great shade tree for parks, estates, and campuses around Indianapolis.

Pro Tip: Best results come in moist, well-drained soils. Root zone prep is key in heavy Indiana clay.

3. Sweetgum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*)

Fall Color: A kaleidoscope of reds, purples,

oranges, and golds — often all on one tree

Why Use It: Sweetgum offers unmatched variety in fall color, providing landscapes with true “wow” factor.

Pro Tip: While it tolerates our clay soils, avoid planting near high-traffic areas where its spiky seedpods could be an issue.

4. Black Gum / Tupelo (*Nyssa sylvatica*)

Fall Color: Intense scarlet red, sometimes shading into burgundy

Why Use It: Black gum is underutilized in Indianapolis landscapes, yet it offers strong fall performance and a neat, upright form.

Pro Tip: Works especially well in clay soils and holds color late into the season. Consider cultivars like 'Wildfire' for added appeal.

5. Scarlet Oak (*Quercus coccinea*)

Fall Color: Bold crimson red that stands out against other trees

Why Use It: Oaks bring structure, shade, and longevity. The scarlet oak combines those benefits with exceptional fall color.

Pro Tip: It prefers well-drained soils; avoid poorly drained sites to ensure vibrant leaf color.

Bringing Fall Color to Indianapolis Landscapes

By carefully selecting species that thrive in central Indiana's soils and climate, landscapers can guarantee clients a spectacular autumn display year after year. Blending maples, oaks, and black gum not only staggers color timing but also provides resilience against pests and disease. With proper soil preparation and establishment care, these trees will elevate Indianapolis properties every fall season.



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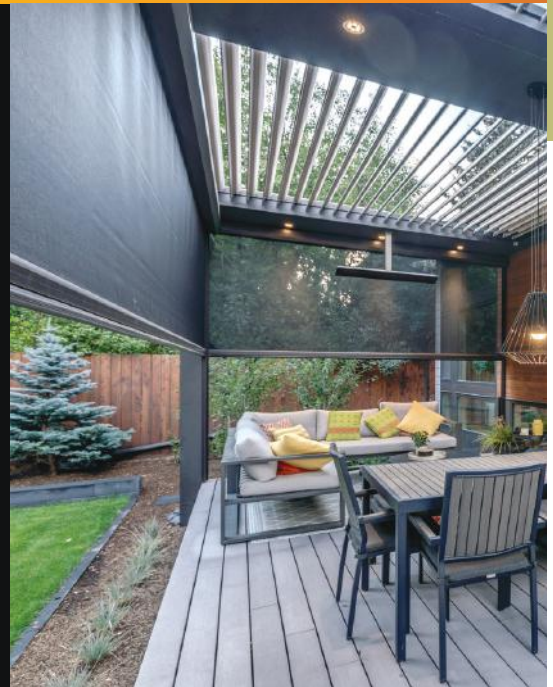
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There lives a tree in Danvers Massachusetts with quite a story to tell. As a seed in 1630, memory brings back a long voyage across a wet and salty sea, tossing and turning in the ships' hold, thinking never to see the light of day again. Upon arrival to the new world, planted in very fertile soil, the tree was proud to be, one of the first cultivated ornamental fruit trees in the new world. As roots stretched, and fruiting began, stories were heard of wild Native Americans prowling in the vicinity, witches conjuring up spells and of the rumblings of a revolution. Wondering what kind of new world this was, fruit was put forth and life seemed good on the three hundred acre Orchard Farm.

Growth was steady, wild Native Americans and witches disappeared and a new flag was welcomed, with its stars and stripes. Pummeled to the ground by raging weather, the tree withstood hurricanes in 1804, 1815, and 1843. Then in the 1860's there were more rumblings



of yet another revolution, this one with brother fighting brother.

Longfellow noted the strength of the tree when he said,

I suppose the tree makes new wood every year, so that some parts of it are always young. Perhaps this is the way with some men when they grow old. I hope it is so with me.

Many tempests had come and gone, and the three hundred acre Orchard Farm fell away, when what should have been the final blow came. A saw-wielding vandal attacked the tree savagely, hacking off all of its limbs. Yet, as if in defiance, once again new wood sprang forth, and today Endicott's Pear stands as a testament to strong roots and the determination of a tree.

"Consulting Arborist Corner" is brought to you by Jud Scott, an ILA member and a Registered Consulting Arborist. As a Consulting Arborist, Jud is available to assist you with tree conflicts that may arise. Jud can be reached at Jud Scott Consulting Arborist LLC, 317-815-8733 or by email at Treeconsultant@aol.com. Website www.arboristexpert.com

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