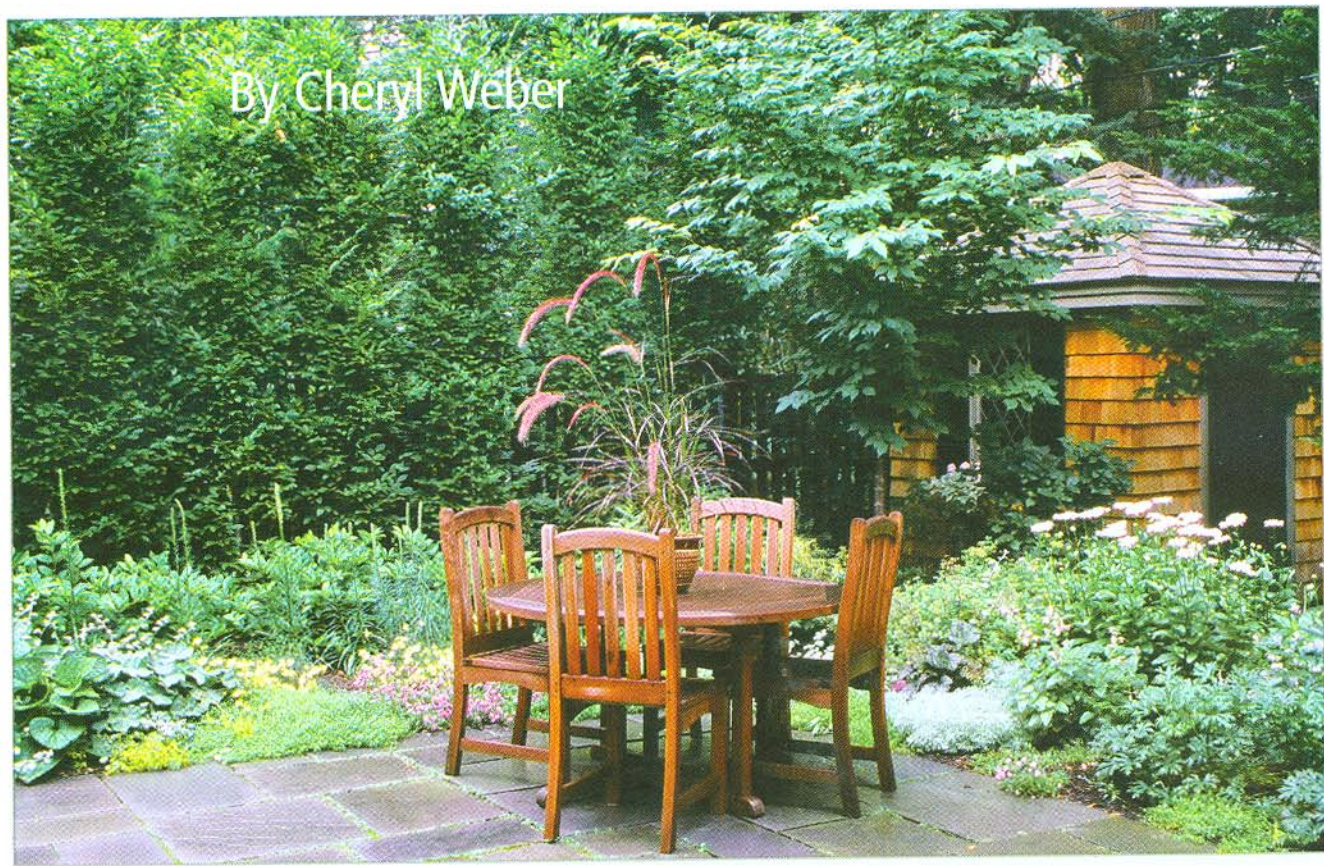


Expert Opinion

# Curtain Call

Good screens make good neighbors.

By Cheryl Weber



The trick to creating attractive screening is to vary the edges. For this garden a pavilion provides one element of privacy. ■

Landscape contractor: Bill Knight Inc., Hopkinton, Mass.; Designer: Gregory Lombardi Design, Cambridge, Mass.

A year ago, landscape architect Gregory Lombardi was called in to fix a botched attempt at screening a suburban property in Wellesley, Mass. The previous owners had remodeled the Colonial house and installed a 6-foot white fence around the entire backyard. The effect, he says, was like being in a cattle pen. It's a classic example of the quick fix gone wrong—creating privacy while leaving the occupants feeling claustrophobic.

As lawn sizes shrink to accommodate larger houses and clients find themselves face to face with the neighbors, the need for attractive screening—

whether for visual or acoustical privacy—has never been greater. The key, though, is to think of a screen as part of a controlled design plan. "It needs to be a compositional piece," says Lombardi of Lombardi Design in Cambridge, Mass. At the Wellesley garden, he convinced the owners to give up 10 feet of lawn at strategic spots to plant mixed evergreens, deciduous trees, and shrubs alongside the fence. The lawn sloped toward the house, and by building retaining walls to create a level play lawn and a patio, he also added visual interest inside the space.

"You don't want a uniform condition the whole way around the property," Lombardi says.

